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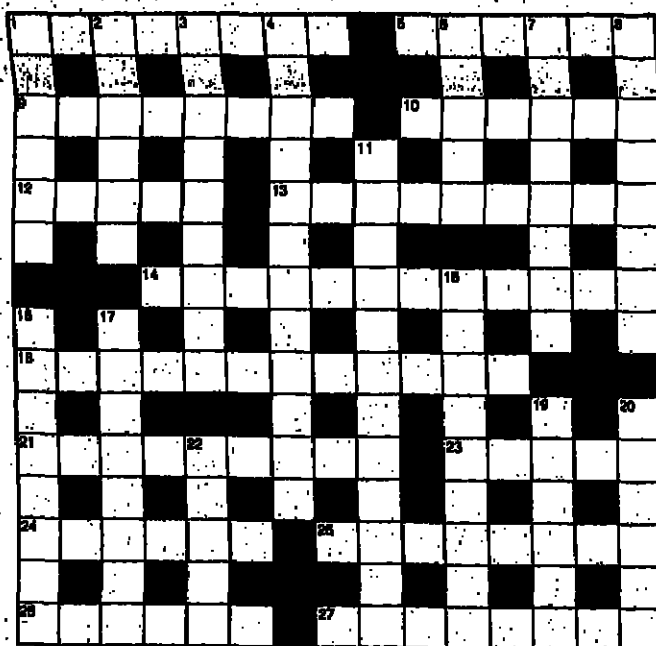
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ACROSS

- 1 Monumental sufferer at grief. (8)
- 2 "Lead Thunder to its bottom
shook --" (Pope). (3,3)
- 3 Conventional shepherd con-
founded shorn per. (8)
- 4 Egeria led me off without Delia
to come out as Thers from the
Deep. (6)
- 5 Five in period song come to
the point -- like Humphrey Dum-
my. (5)
- 6 Christopher is he right to
blush for instance? (9)
- 7 Huguenots the time to de-
corate him with green. (4,2,3,5)
- 8 Brought to an end without plot
by Priestley. (5,2,4)
- 9 The first One happens to hold
right to exist. (3)
- 10 Literary Board died for lack of
justice -- to the author? (5)
- 11 She stands for Dukes at (only
nominal). (6)
- 12 Role of Maud (Chlo) -- final
collapse will see the end of the
world. (8)
- 13 In drama Agnes' (formal)
general. (6)
- 14 Newcomer engulf port to expose
pilgrim. (8)

DOWN

- 1 Ancient weapon? (6)
- 2 Mongrel escaped from inland
region without us. (6)
- 3 Take up herd I see I must
express it more softly here. (9)
- 4 Soldiers shoot every day. (7,5)

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THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

FRIDAY •

their "Chambre introuvable" and their "enfant du miracle", dreamed of the impossible restoration of a Golden Age that they had themselves invented. The clerical party was convinced that if only France dedicated itself to God's work, the Almighty would provide the means. Bonapartists, and most notably Louis Napoleon himself, moved in a world of mists, where peace, military glory, prosperity for all, the triumph of Catholicism and popular sovereignty enjoyed a shadowy coexistence. The republicans, intoxicated with the complex myths of the revolution, took it for granted that when Paris spoke France was bound to obey and a new republic would once again bring enlightenment to the nations and liberation to Poland. Socialism, as it existed in France, assumed forms that Marx was to dismiss as utopian. Even the great Karl himself, in 1848, was perpetually scanning the horizon for the first sight of the conquering armies of a proletariat that had scarcely begun to exist.

Lamartine was not the only one to hypnotize himself with his own incantations. The Vienna frontiers were to be revised to France's advantage—but peacefully; an alliance was to be made with England—without renouncing objectives that the British Government would not accept; he gradually came to accept popular sovereignty and the inevitability of a republic—but it must not lead to collectivism or threaten property. During the economic crisis of 1846 he advocated the imposition of a uniform national price for cereals—but without interfering with the grain trade. The historian of the Convention should have known better than that. It was partly a matter of aiming at mutually irreconcilable goals but also, and less credibly, of telling different audiences what each wanted to hear.

The 1848 revolution brought triumph and disaster within a matter of months. He had succeeded so well in his public relations that when the Provisional Government was formed in February he was on everyone's list. During the short-lived republic of 1848, before elections could be held he struggled, honourably but without guile, to exorcise the demon of violence by his oratory alone. He leaked revolutionary sentiments to the press and then repudiated them in official despatches. He assured the British Ambassador, Lord Normanby, that he recognized only the Union Jack within Great Britain, but not before he had accepted an Irish flag from a group of emigrant nationalists. For a time it worked. Lamartine made a useful contribution to delaying the inevitable and the April elections were a personal triumph, when he was returned in ten Departments, polling over a million

and a quarter votes and securing 99 per cent of the votes in his own Department.

Reality was not long in breaking through, symbolized appropriately enough when a demonstrator during the *journee* of May 15 silenced him with "Enough of your poetry." He insisted on including Ledru-Rollin on the Executive Commission, which alienated the conservatives, only to break with him after the June Days, which lost him any radical support. In the presidential election of December he ran a bad fifth, polling a mere 18,000 votes in the entire country. In the following May the *Saône-et-Loire* ejected him from the Assembly. He soon came back, when he won a by-election in the Loiret, but the *coup d'état* of 1851 merely extinguished a political career that was already in ruins.

During the Second Empire Lamartine turned back to the written word, in the hopeless search for a way of paying his debts. This time it was history: four more volumes on the Revolution, eight on the Restoration, two on the 1848 revolution (described by Fortescue as "a clear and deliberate distortion of events") but what politicians can be objective about his own eclipse? a history of Turkey in eight volumes, a life of Alexander the Great in two more and a history of Russia, not to mention a play, a novel and various periodicals intended to provide the uneducated with improving reading. When his collected works were published in 1860-61 they ran to forty-one volumes. It was all to no purpose. He could never repeat the success of his *History of the Girondins*, the debts went on accumulating and his serial works were popular only in intention. Gradually he declined into an old age of terrifying bitterness and frustration, without the will to live or the ability to die. His release did not come until 1869.

Fortescue packs all this into less than 300 pages. His biography is of the "shilling life will give you all the facts" variety, although prices have gone up since Auden's day. He seems to have said, not merely, all the Parisian historians but a good many of his provincial ones too and he knows all about Lamartine's friends. This gives his book a somewhat staccato character: there is so much going on that he never has time to investigate anything in much depth. His intention was presumably to write the kind of book that undergraduates would actually read—the last biography of Lamartine in English was published as long ago as 1918—and it would be unfair to criticize him for not attempting an analysis in depth that would have called for a much longer book.

All the same, one is rather puzzled

by his decision to tackle the subject at all, since he begins with what looks like a fairly pronounced dislike of Lamartine. An essay for the *Quai d'Orsay* was written with "his usual hypocrisy"; his attempt to become an improving landlord was made purely to promote his political career; his poetry was another means to the same end. Fortescue even suggests that "he may also have exploited his mother's death to cultivate a newspaper and gain favourable publicity". Gradually, this carping tone gives way to something like neutrality but it is not until the conclusion that Lamartine is entitled to any sympathy. We are then told of his "considerable abilities", his "dedication to principles" and his "high ideals" in private as well as public life. This is perhaps going rather far in the opposite direction if one contrasts his affairs with married women and his illegitimate offspring with his repeated assertions of the sanctity of the family. One never gets a consistent picture of what it must have felt like to be this inconsistent man, which is perhaps fair enough.

Fortescue begins his conclusion by quoting Corneille's remark that Lamartine was "Poète avant tout", which may be true but scarcely supports his biographer's decision to leave out the poetry and stick to the politics. In the end we are left without any deep insight into who Lamartine was but we get a clear and authoritative account of what he did.

"Voilà un livre haut placé... dans l'opinion publique": a cartoon to mark the publication of *Histoire des Girondins* in 1847. Lamartine noted that "Des femmes les plus élégantes ont passé la nuit pour attendre leur exemplaire."

Safe behind walls

Eugen Weber

BERNARD CHEVALIER

Les hommes villes de France, du XIVe au XVIIIe siècle. 345pp. Paris: Aubier Montaigne. 130fr. 2 7007 0291 3

Bernard Chevalier has written a highly readable account of French towns during a very active period—the last such time that many of them were to know for a long while: the three hundred odd years between the end of the "medieval" thirteenth century and the Edict of Nantes.

The *bonne ville* is a town, but not just any town. It is "good" because it fulfils its function, which is first to provide the security of a wall and moat, then to serve as administrative and judicial centre of a greater or lesser region, finally to function as a community with institutions of its own. Thus, fourteenth-century Compiègne "est bonne ville fermée en laquelle demeure... en grant et suffisant nombre notables conseillers, clercs et coutumiers pour dempurer, soutenir et garder les loiz, causes et procès... ce qui n'est pas ainsi dit dit Pierrefonds, car ce n'est qu'une ville champêtre, sans fermeture... despourvue de conseil".

For Chevalier, the fundamental difference between ordinary country towns and *bonnes villes* does not lie in their size or in their political status, such as "economic" and "demographic" growth stem from the fact that, in a *bonne ville*, legal and other business thrive in profitable symbiosis because men of law could always be found. And we shall see that the proliferation of these professionals, while played a material part in the prosperity of towns and townsmen, turned out as crucial in their decline.

By the sixteenth century, of the twelve hundred or so walled towns in France, about five hundred were mainly seats endowed with a permanent royal tribunal. Leaving aside the "great" judicial resorts (Paris, Toulouse, Rouen, Bordeaux, Orléans, Dijon, Aix-en-Provence and Rennes), some three hundred of these county-court towns turned into true judicial centres, many of them financial centres too: residences of officers or "farmers" collecting aids and taxes. Above all, though, by that time the men of law and office had multiplied and their power had grown.



whom their merchant cousins looked like poor relations; and the social break between the officer and the merchant class dissolved the erstwhile unanimity of the bourgeoisie.

Nobles had left the towns as the thirteenth century ended, and this relinquished urban management to the "honourable men" of the bourgeoisie, grown wealthy by trade and the farming of taxes, but advantaged too by royal policies which, during much of the time the book covers, shifted direct taxes from towns to countryside, and used the towns as *ad hoc* banks: a source of loans to be guaranteed by the proceeds from royal taxes (the origin of *rentes*). Some of the advantages of the rich trickled down to their more modest fellows. Violence was endemic and everyone was armed; rich and poor lived very close, with the latter often buying their grain and wine from the former's store; and there was friction between more or less honourable estates (the butcher's bloody trade was infamous, which explains their frequent presence in the van of social disturbances); so there was plenty of opportunity for explosions, especially in hard times. But vertical integration minimized friction, as did public assistance to the "good" poor. Nor did the superior advantages of a few seem to affect the growth of a strong collective identity and local patriotism, strengthened by persistent endogamy, maintained by the breach between urban notables and exclusively rural nobility, reaffirmed by the growing assertion of a culture of urbanity (a word introduced at that time) as the antithesis of rusticity.

Chevalier discusses urbanity (hardly to be recognized as such today) and urbanism (ditto) and neatly handles the economic and institutional ups and downs of three centuries. He shows that the notorious orientation of "honourable men" towards administrative positions, public finance, and legal offices (with a concomitant detachment in due course from municipal affairs), was not due principally to their quest for noble status, but to very utilitarian estimates of the higher revenues to be derived from such functions. It remains that the evolution of *bourgeois* into *gentilhomme* meant less capital to be invested in the more productive pursuits that had first made the bourgeois possible, let alone in that bourgeois idealism, let alone in that New Law thinking shape around 1540, but which never took off. And that the growing interest in offices, which the Crown played and preyed on after

C. O. BRINK

Horace on Poetry: Epistles Book II, The Letters to Augustus and Flavius. 644pp. Cambridge University Press. £47.50. 0 521 20069 5

There is a great deal of Greek and Roman poetry about poetry. For the most part metaphor and symbol predominate in it. Heliconian springs, Apollo, the Muses and other inspirational gods, disputes with envious literary antagonists, arts and crafts, bees and trees, contrasting types of life, ideals of purity, originality, subtlety and variety—these and many other similar topics are the staples of the rich programmatic literature of antiquity, which can range from the totally explicit, eg. the prologue to Callimachus' *Aelia*, to the subtly implicit, eg. Horace's own first Ode (1.1). The poets of the late Roman republic and early Empire, like their Hellenistic predecessors, applied themselves to this subject area with great enthusiasm.

What sets Horace apart from his fellow-Augustans and indeed from all other ancient poets is that he alone among surviving writers deals with the writing of poetry in critical rather than metaphorical terms, treating such subjects as the choice and arrangement of material for poetry, the appropriate vocabulary for it, poetic unity and excellence, the different poetic forms and their relations, Greek and Roman literature, style and content. Moreover, he does so at considerable length in three works in epistolary form, the *Ars Poetica*, addressed to the "Ploetes", and the two shorter treatises of *Epistles* II, the *Epistula ad Augustum* and the *Epistula ad Florum*.

The works themselves are as fascinating to read as they are elusive to interpret. Here Horace is typically Horatian: sophisticated, complex, ironic and self-mocking, and far too skilled a poet to have produced a series of verified lectures on creative writing. Rather, the notion of satisfying the curiosity of his contemporaries about the life of a Roman poet and his attitudes to his work is exploited as a starting-point for three brilliant and complex meditations on the linked themes of subjects, criticism, philosophy and life. Of course, readers and scholars have not failed to be intrigued by the possibility that this most central of Augustan writers is really telling us in these works something about his place in the Augustan world, his relations with the *princes* and his attitudes to

his work and his age. But the nineteenth and early twentieth century did not provide the literary epistles of Horace with the major edition and commentary which their importance would certainly have justified. It was then perhaps inevitable that by the middle of the twentieth century scholarly discussion of them had become bogged down in a series of unfruitfully opposed views, which either under- or over-emphasized the element of literary theory. In consequence the works themselves became unjustly undervalued.

The role played by the absence of a satisfactory commentary in this process is characteristic, and it reminds us of the vital place of major commentaries within the history of classical scholarship. More than any other type of scholarly work, it is the commentary which has formed the corner-stone of the discipline. Through the centuries, ever since antiquity, schoolchildren and scholars have studied the major classical texts with, at their side, a line-for-line, sometimes word-for-word, commentary, which offered them relevant (and sometimes irrelevant) information of all types—lexical, grammatical, geographical, textual, etc. The limitations of the commentary form on scholars seeking a wider understanding of the work as a whole have recently become more and more evident—knowing seventeen unconnected facts about each line of a poem does not necessarily lead to any grasp of its structure, sense, or place in the literary universe. But the constructive response to these limitations is not to abandon the commentary—and with it the precision and breadth of learning which is a necessary basis for coming to terms with the works of cultures as alien from ours as those of the ancient Greeks and Romans. The commentary form is capable of being redefined, extended and made infinitely more flexible; and it is precisely this which C. O. Brink has achieved in masterly fashion.

The first volume of Professor Brink's three-volume commentary on the literary epistles of Horace appeared in 1963, the second in 1971, and this, the third volume, in late 1982. Volume One (the *Prolegomena*) was a major monograph, mainly concerned with the *Ars Poetica*. It made clear both by what it achieved and by what it omitted that the literary epistles of Horace had at last found a commentator who was prepared to treat them in all their complexity. Now that the commentary has appeared in its complete form, Brink can be seen to have created a completely new type of scholarly work: extensive monograph-

scale treatments of major areas, a new text, line-by-line and word-by-word comment accompanied by extensive discussion of each section of the poems, appendices, extended essays, all these are coherently combined in a new means of applying scholarship and critical intelligence to classical poetry. Not only is the form unique, but the function of the different ways of handling the material is also something new: nothing is extraneous, everything is dealt with in the most appropriate mode, and all parts interact with all others.

The appendices which follow the detailed commentary are more numerous in Volume Three (twenty-one) than in Volume Two (three). A number of them are concerned with a field of interest wider than the literary epistles of Horace, and their content should be known to scholars working in all areas of ancient studies. I note as of particular personal value Two, which deals with the Latin equivalents of the Greek *kritikos* and *grammatikos*, Five, on *exigere*, and Nineteen, on the *Genius*. After the appendices comes a long discursive essay (or set of essays) entitled "The Letters to Augustus and Flavius as Augustan Poetry". This deals with a number of important problems with ramifications for all ancient poetry. When discussing poetic patterns Brink is of course following on in part from his earlier discussion in Volume Two. But there is much that is new and, as in Volume Two, his general remarks on this topic lead into specific analyses—here of the conceptual and structural make-up of the *Epistula ad Augustum* and *Epistula ad Florum*. Brink's approach to these questions are masterly; the sheer complexity of the problems becomes, in his hands, an instrument of instruction. The same can be said of his treatment of Augustanism in Augustan poetry and his periodization of Augustus's reign, and the implications which emerge from it for the understanding of Augustan poetry. Most scholars working in this field have their own private visions of Horace, of Augustus and of the key dates in Augustus's reign; Brink's perceptions

background to Horace's stricture, quoting Cicero and Livy for this purpose. He ends by pointing out that there is little evidence that what Horace is complaining about does in fact contrast with an earlier and simpler method of staging Greek tragedies. To this effect, ancient and modern authorities are cited. All this, in all its detail, occupies less than one page of Brink's work. The note is, in effect, a learned paper compressed into that space without any loss of effectiveness.

Cambridge University Press, which has of late received some criticism in the pages of the *TLS* for production quality, deserves nothing but commendation for *Horace on Poetry*. In this case, the quality of the work has been matched by the quality of production. It is clear that no reasonable expense has been spared on typesetting, printing and binding; above all—and a rare phenomenon at present—the author has been given the space he needed to complete the work properly. One hopes that purchasers will respond by realizing that in terms both of current production costs and of the enormous importance of the content, *Horace on Poetry* (including Volume Three) is very reasonably priced indeed.

of these matters will certainly be an essential corrective to many assumptions. Indeed, it would be a rash scholar who now ventured into print on these matters without having satisfied himself that he had taken proper account of this section of Brink's work.

Horace on Poetry has the unusual quality of being at once immensely original and highly authoritative. This is of course partly because Brink carries out so scrupulously his programme of informing the reader on as many levels as possible. But it is also because he has brought to the work a combination of scholarship, experience and perceptiveness which can only arouse admiration. There will of course be the disagreement with occasional details which no major commentary can fail to provoke. But in their scope, detail and sheer intellectual grandeur, the three volumes of *Horace on Poetry* are a milestone in the history of classical scholarship, and they must surely be welcomed with acclaim by every classicist. Despite Brink's modesty in his preface, *Horace on Poetry* does indeed rival the great commentaries he names there, which include Wilamowitz's *Heracles* and Fraenkel's *Agamemnon*. It cannot be doubted that a century from now it too will be named and used in their company.

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'Bravo!'
GRAHAM GREENE

Stephen Vizinczey

An Innocent Millionaire

the new bestseller by the author of
In Praise of Older Women

'shows where the true values lie—not in wealth or the rule of law but in that as yet inviolate sector where a man and woman make love... a humour more mature than that of Wodehouse... or even Waugh... I was entertained but also deeply moved: here is a novel set bang in the middle of our decadent, polluted, corrupt world that, in some curious way, breathes a kind of desperate hope.'

ANTHONY BURGESS, *Punch*

'I emerged spinning with admiration for the story's ironies, so repeatedly and symmetrically folded back on themselves, for the sheer energetic sustaining of the invention, for the perfect pitch of the narrative tone.'

BRIGID BROPHY

'romantic, intelligent, well-written and skillfully constructed... immensely exciting... a rattling good yarn, raised to a much higher plane by the author's cunning, by his wit, his shrewd observation of behaviour and his wise understanding of human greed in all sorts and conditions of men. Above all, it is his huge, imaginative gusto that makes his book such a delight.'

NINA BAWDEN, *Daily Telegraph*

'A very funny and serious book... the author's English is timeless, elaborate, musical... the narrative is packed with aphorisms... tempo, twists, humour and horror speed up... a crescendo of treachery, delay and despoliation that makes "Bleak House" look like a teaparty... Someone urges Mark to read Balzac... But Mark with his monomaniacal quest; his passion for money, his lone stand against the world, is already a character in a novel by Balzac, as are his enemies: powered by greed and anarchic individualism.'

VICTORIA GLENDINNING, *The Sunday Times*

Hamish Hamilton £3.95

Eternal for ever

Paolo Filo della Torre

PAUL HOFMAN

Rome: The Sweet Tempestuous Life. 245pp. Collins Harvill. £7.95. 0 050 26277 2

Paul Hofman, correspondent of the *New York Times* since 1945, knows Rome, it would seem, better than the Romans, and his knowledge of Roman secrets is reflected in this entertaining book, in which we can read about subjects as diverse as the Church, Roman society, political scandals, kidnapping, art, spaghetti. Hofman appears to be as much at home in the dim ambience of Elsa's *casa chiusa* as he is in the world of the *Croce della Caccia*—a well-known club for the aristocracy. Most of the stories that he tells are contemporary Roman legends. The "Mr Pikit" Callaghan brothers are as much part of Rome today as they would have been during the last days of the Empire. Gibbon would have recognized the type, immediately, though Hofman is not Gibbon; he has provided a diverting socio-economic backdrop to the glories and disasters that are Rome.

For example, we are introduced to the uniquely Roman *travatore*—

finders of everything, who usually operate in the Porta Portese flea-market on the right bank of the Tiber: a *travatore* can find anything required at an extremely competitive price. Hofman is unclear on the role of the Italian Communist Party as a *travatore* but one is able to understand from his description the way in which the Communists in Rome are very different from Communists elsewhere. His guide is the *Corriere della Sera*—the alliance between the Communists and the Christian Democrats—is admirable and informative.

In *Rome: the Sweet Tempestuous Life* soft sunsets illuminate the chaotic traffic and the general deterioration of the quality of life at almost every level. People and place city itself: the only eternal being that they are less monstrous, not only in comparison with the splendour that was Ancient Rome, but also with the more up-to-date myth of Federico Fellini's *Dolce vita*. For if anything has survived Rome's evanescent renaissance of the late 1950s and 1960s, Hofman tells us, it can certainly no longer be found in the Via Veneto or in the Piazza Fontana del Trevi. Mass tourism and hordes of people converging on them from the poorer districts have virtually killed the fascination of the former centres of the *Dolce vita*: the transformation of a Rizzoli bookshop into a bank not only impoverishes the

Via Veneto but is a loss to the whole city.

Roman existence today is as easy and irresponsible as it has been since its first decline and fall. The philosophy of *arrangiarsi* will, Hofman believes, never disappear. Apart from pleasure, strange rites and subterranean scandals, tragic events, such as assassinations and kidnappings, occur regularly. However, Hofman feels that these are not the most important aspects of the afternoon siesta, espresso coffee taken at small cafes, and of course, *il gelato*.

His portraits add up to an overall mosaic. Rome is undoubtedly very special. Unlikely to become merely a museum, it should be able to survive industrial civilization which, as Hofman points out, does at least as much harm to the visible heritage of the city as did the barbarian invasion, the sack of Rome, and all the other historic calamities that it has lived through.

Archaeological Times to the End of the Peloponnesian War, the first volume of *Translated Documents of Greece and Rome* edited and translated by Charles W. Fornara. (241pp. Cambridge University Press. £22.50. 0 521 25019 6). has recently been published in a revised second edition. The material, much of it translated for the first time, is compiled from ancient encyclopedias, scholia and inscriptions,

On the Margins

Hospitality and unease, weekend guests in this Chekhovian rectory painted a frivolous bluish pink. It is comfortable and fallen, as though run by children, but with an adult's guiding hand for basics, food, warmth, light... At other times, what conversations, what demeanour! I stare at myself in the grey, oxidised mirror over the fireplace, godless, inept, countrified. The distance disappears between rooms and voices. Stuff and centripetal. I tag after my hosts, talking, offering 'help', sitting on tables as they pass, and in the end, I am left alone.

We drove twenty miles to buy roses, to a stately home behind a moat and a pair of netted allanias. The happy, youthful master of the house was already on his second family. His little boy must have guessed. He had the exemplary energy of the late child, working on his parents' stamina. He was serious and successful, running to fetch his prayer books, one at a time, they were so heavy.

Back here, I feel again spiritual, unhappy, the wrong age. Not to be condemned to, still less fit for equality. I quarrel with you over your work 'accomplished', and then sink off upstairs to make it up. We hear the hoarse, see-saw crier of the donkeys grazing in the churchyard, mother and daughter, and the first mosquitoes going up and down, practising their verticals like a video game. Next door, his green clothes hanging on pegs, Eric, the rustic butler, is taking a bath, whistling and crooning happily. In his timeless, folkloric voice, I pat your nakedness in evil whispers, I manage to convince you.

Michael Hofmann

Coming to blows

Helge Rubinstein

MARGARET BORKOWSKI,
MERYN MURCH and VAL
WALKER

Marital Violence: The Community Response
230pp. Tavistock. £10.95 (paperback,
£4.95).
0 442 78120 7

Violence inside marriage is a subject most of us prefer to avoid. This book is based on research commissioned by the DHSS into "the community response" to marital violence, and the authors set out to discover how solicitors, GPs, social workers and health visitors react to the cases of marital violence that come to their attention. The answer is: with ambivalence, like the rest of society.

The first problem is one of definition, and here already one stumbles into the heart of the difficulty. Since marriage is essentially a private matter, how can any outsider define what constitutes violence? Any aggressive, hostile behaviour which falls outside the normal rough and tumble of marriage, said one doctor—but one man's rough and tumble may be another's playfulness and a third man's violent assault. A solicitor thought that persistent intellectual bullying by the more intelligent partner counts as violence, while a social worker saw it as "any violent act leading to injury as opposed to mere threat".

It was not the researchers' aim to ascertain the extent of marital violence in Britain, but they estimate that as many as one in five, or even one in three marriages may have violent episodes. Nor was it their task to establish the causes of violence in marriage, but from the explanations

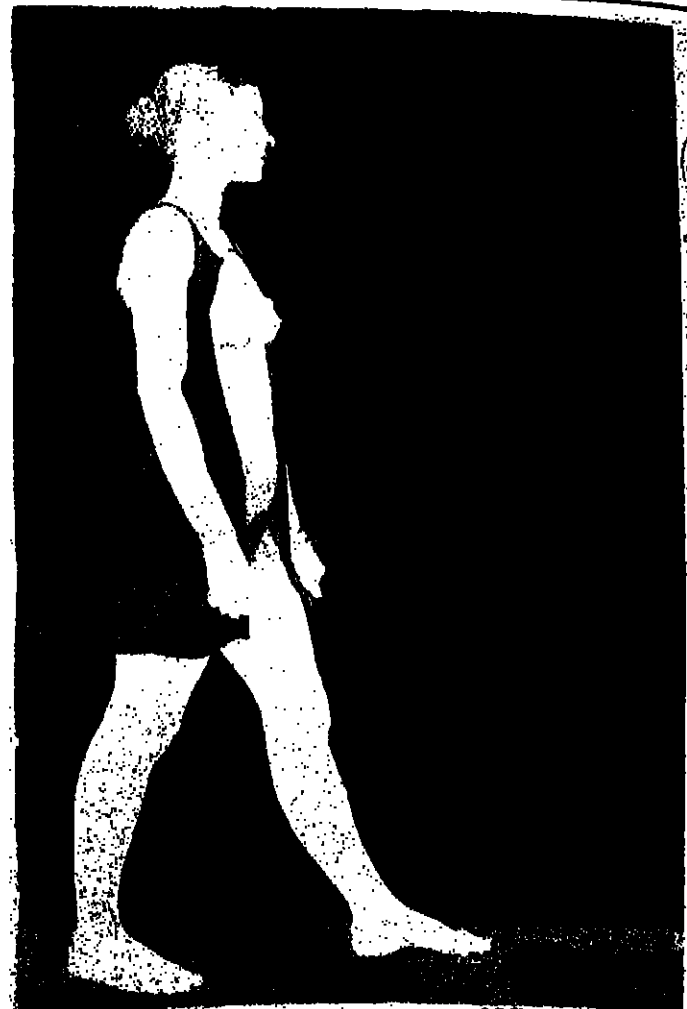
given by the practitioners questioned, it seems that alcohol, poverty and psycho-sexual problems were the cause mentioned most frequently—not much change there from the findings of Victorian social reformers. Cultural expectations have a lot to do with our attitudes to violence in the family. While such violence is by no means confined to one class, it seems that working-class women (or men, for that matter, for they too can be the victims of assault) are more prepared to acknowledge that it exists, or to put it differently, the socially deprived are more used to asking for help from the statutory agencies, and we therefore have more evidence of violence among the poorer sections of the population. As long as we think of violence as a form of deviance, we perpetuate a myth of what is normality in marriage, but, as the authors point out, there has been no research into what the norms of marital behaviour actually are. Should there be, could there be?

The crux of the difficulty lies in the very nature of marriage itself, its fundamental purpose being to provide the partners with the experience of intimacy which is so central to the well-being of the individual; and intimacy needs the protection of privacy in order to thrive. "The irony is that privacy contributes to, and reinforces, the intimacy and sense of solidarity in family life that society values, while it also nurtures and protects the very conditions in which conflict and violence develop." As soon as one partner asks for outside help or protection, that boundary of privacy has been transgressed, and the fear is that the intimacy may be lost. Violence itself can be seen as the expression of closeness, and this can be one of the reasons why wives return to a violent spouse—at least he cares enough to bash her around. Because this is often hard for an outsider to understand, social workers and lawyers are frequently irritated and frustrated by

what seems irrational, even self-destructive behaviour in their clients, and this in turn adds to their reluctance to involve themselves in such cases. A further reason for the reluctance lies in the tension between the wish to respect the privacy of marriage and the desire to protect the potential victim, all the more so since such protection often implies some degree of social or legal control or sanctions. Social workers, who see themselves primarily as supportive, suffer most from this contradiction in their roles.

No wonder it is difficult to formulate a clear social policy on how to deal with violence in marriage. Even when a practical course of action emerges, as happened in the 1970s with the women's refuge movement, the issues rapidly became clouded. The Women's Aid organization became entangled with the feminist movement, which in turn affected the attitude of government towards giving financial support. Without such support many hostels have become so run down that home, even with a violent husband, often seems preferable. The wheel has come full circle and the patriarchal society seems to have won again in what has been made to appear a power struggle between men and women.

The value of *Marital Violence* lies in the way the authors' research has identified and unravelled the many issues at stake. However, having posed the question—how can violence in marriage be stopped without necessarily breaking up the marriage?—and having made a plea that the complexities should not be allowed to be an excuse for inaction, the authors themselves seem to become paralysed by the difficulties, and can only recommend greater interdisciplinary training and communication among the practitioners concerned. It is a long way from the prompt and untrammelled response that the victim of violence needs at the critical moment.



"Striding Nude, blue dress II", 1979-81, an oil painting by Egon Schiele, has been in the exhibition of his paintings and drawings at Brown and Darby, 19 Cork Street, London W1, from May 18 to June 23.

The surrogate role

Mary Kathleen Benet

ALICE HEIM

Thicker than Water? Adoption: its loyalties, pitfalls and joys
211pp. Secker and Warburg. £8.95 (paperback, £5.50).
0 436 19155 5

Does adoption work, or is blood thicker than water? Many adoptive families are just as happy as "biological" families. Adopted children can have problems; on the other hand sometimes they feel that they were specially chosen. And everyone knows that problems can arise even in biological families. These, in all their sublime banality, are Alice Heim's conclusions. She sent out an "open-ended" letter asking adoptive parents and adoptees about the advantages and disadvantages of adoption. On the basis of about a hundred replies, she believes that she and her contributors have "got to the

guts of the matter" because the writers themselves chose whether to reply and what aspects of adoption to discuss.

This makes for a cosy book, but one which leaves out all the main problems of modern adoption. Class does matter, Dr Heim writes, because external signs of class membership—such as accent, are environmentally determined. The adoptee who was protesting about an adoptive parent moved her down the social scale, and who realized as an adult that life is a race in which some people start halfway around the track, will scarcely think this was the point. Race fares little better. Several parents observe that their black adopted children are likely to have more difficulty later because of being black than because of being adopted, and one offers this winsome tip on raising such children: use race hate epithets as pet names in the home. Then, when the child goes to school and is called "nigger", it will reply sweetly, "Why, did you know my nickname?"

Heim, who has brought up two adopted children herself, focuses on new laws giving adoptees access to information about their origins. She agrees with the adoptive parents who say "Let sleeping dogs lie". But this dog is no longer asleep. Single-parent adoption is stigmatised as "fashionable" and dangerous because it may lead to what for Heim is the horror of horrors: "only-ones". She says flatly, "At least two infants should be adopted." She argues that adoptees seem to feel only-ness especially keenly; and to long for their own children so that finally they will have blood relations. Why is this, and what does it say about adoption?

Hardly leaving these obvious questions, Heim offers an extraordinary section on child-raising in general. Why was this sub-*Spock* compendium tacked on? We learn about bottle-feeding, potty training "as ever", middle-way products best reserved for games such as *Holms* and *Snap* and popular in the latency period; how abroad is beneficial for young people.

What will parents, adoptive or not, learn from this? What will young makers learn from the rest of the book? Heim has no idea, as she freely informs us, whether her sample is representative. But she feels there are some things we should know. Single children should not be given the cure of adoption, and child-battering by natural parents can still unfortunately occur. Perhaps at the Old Bailey, where Dr Heim serves as an expert witness, she has come across people who still do not know these things.

Carol Rumens

Missiles, men and money

John Gooch

GWYN HARRIS-JENKINS
(Editor)

Armed Forces and the Welfare State: Challenges in the 1980s—Britain, the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden and the United States
233pp. Macmillan. £20.
0 353 33542 2

At a time when all the Western economies are in difficulties and when the words of one of the contributors to this book, "the beginning of the end of the welfare state is perhaps at hand", it makes good sense to try to assess the problems which will face defence planners and politicians in the coming decade. The five essays gathered together here, along with two contributions from the editor, seek to do this by addressing two issues simultaneously: the problem of high and rising defence costs colliding with increased financial restrictions, and the competition between the needs of defence and the hitherto accepted requirements of the welfare state. The latter is as yet more an academic than a practical problem; politicians have not so far been reduced to offering the public Trident missiles in exchange for hospitals. But something not unlike that might conceivably make its way on to the political agenda in some of the countries under review here. If it does there is one brutally simple way out of the impasse which none of the essays squarely face, but more of that later.

The countries selected for detailed study—Britain, the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden and the United States—are not ideal for the purposes of making comparisons and generalizations: the United States does not really belong here, but France and Italy do. Nor do the contributors tackle their subjects in a uniform manner. Perhaps because of

the diversity of treatments, no one makes the fundamental point that welfare societies, as well as being instruments for the provision and distribution of services such as health, education and the like, also embody fundamental ideas about social relationships. As these ideas tend towards the egalitarian and the participatory, populations born and brought up under their influence might be expected to find themselves in conflict with some of the more traditional structures and characteristics of the armed forces, as Fritz Olivier and Gerd Teitler, in a fascinating chapter on the "Dutch Experiment" describe the variety of measures being adopted in Holland to overcome such reactions and to make the armed services into something more like civilian work-forces in attitude and structure. Whether similar policies are necessary and appropriate in other societies is something the book does not really consider.

Despite their differences, which are considerable, all five countries face problems which are basically the same: high and escalating defence costs, and the difficulty of recruiting and then retaining adequate personnel. In terms of sheer numbers, Britain, Germany and the United States are confronted with cohorts of eighteen-year-olds which will shrink in size until the mid-1990s, although the Dutch demographic pattern is more consistent. One, whether a period of relatively high unemployment will of itself solve the recruitment problem is hard to say, as examples conflict: Keith Hartley, in the course of a stimulating analysis of Britain's defence needs from an economist's viewpoint, remarks on the positive correlation between unemployment and recruitment from 1970 to 1976, whereas Olivier and Teitler state that even in periods of high unemployment and economic slump the Dutch armed forces have been unable to recruit adequate numbers. The drawbacks of relying on

unemployment—with the admixture of a racial factor—are graphically illustrated in Alan Ned Sabrosky's chapter on the United States, a succinct and wide-ranging study of the American manpower problem and of possible solutions to it.

The problems of competing with civil society to recruit and retain specialists in a technological age are readily apparent, and seem to be universal. Equally, most of the armed forces under analysis here find it hard to secure and retain a large enough body of good non-commissioned officers. Here one feels the absence of a French dimension: recent research has shown that no's in the French navy and air force regard joining the armed forces as an upward social move, the first rung on the professional ladder. The French case may be unique, but given the expectations about income and lifestyle that thirty years of the welfare state have helped to generate, there may be some advantages to be gained from closer analysis of this phenomenon. Diminished social status seems to have given rise to a general difficulty in recruiting to officer corps, and none of the five countries examined here have found the answer to this problem. In terms of the general problem of making up the

overall numbers, solutions under consideration range from extending conscript service and drafting women to, in the German case, conscripting *Gastarbeiter*. In the latter case, the reader is left to speculate on the consequences of such an act.

One of the fundamental facts of defence policy, and something which inevitably raises the question of substitution, is the huge expense of manpower. BAOR, at £1,079,000,000 in 1979-80, cost more than double any other single main item of British defence expenditure, and in Germany operational expenditure (pay rises, enlistment bonuses, improved rank structure) took 49.6 per cent of the budget in 1980. Since these costs are likely to increase rather than diminish, alongside rising technological costs, the issue arises of whether western European populations will be prepared to accept cuts in welfare services alongside higher defence spending, which seems inescapable. The editor himself raises this question in his introduction but does not answer it. As the provision of certain services, or levels of service, shifts from the public to the private sector, people will probably become accustomed to paying a higher price for what the welfare state could provide more cheaply. One obvious

consequence of this will be to reconfirm the importance—even the desirability—of extended deterrence. Nuclear weapons, aside from their possible strategic or political drawbacks, have the advantage of being relatively cheap, which is why they were chosen in the mid-1950s in preference to large conventional forces. Conventional defence is, as *The Economist* demonstrated last July, expensive. Welfare-state man might conceivably be prepared to do a uniform and risk his own death if he believed that by doing so he would significantly diminish the chances of his family, his home and his society being blown to pieces; whether, in a post-welfare age, he would be prepared to pay more for the privilege is a moot point.

One brutally simple answer to the central problem raised by this volume is therefore: cut welfare services and stick to nuclear weapons on a "first-use" basis. There are other answers embedded in this thought-provoking collection, of which perhaps the best is inherent in Keith Hartley's suggestion that the British public be given the opportunity to express an opinion on whether this country should cease to manufacture certain types of weapon and become a competitive buyer instead.

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(*Publishers Weekly*)
000 2226839 £8.95 publication June 20

Aaron and other anglophones

Claude Rawson

MICHAEL STAPLETON

The Cambridge Guide to English Literature

992pp. Cambridge University Press and Newnes Books. £15.
0521 25647 X and 0 600 33173 3

Dictionary of Literary Biography

Volume 13
British Dramatists since World War II
Edited by Stanley Weintraub.
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Volume 14
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British Novelists 1930-1959
Edited by Bernard Oldsey.
713pp in two volumes. \$148 the set.
08103 15374
Detroit: Gale.

The Cambridge Guide to English Literature begins with Aaron and ends with Yvain and Gawain. Zuleika Dobson doesn't get in, which she did (by a whisker) in the earlier Oxford Companion to English Literature, which also (and more to the point) has entries for Zuleika, Zeno, and Zoltus, and Zola, and Zoroaster, including Zarathustra, Thus Spoke.

The difference epitomizes the two reference books, which are so similar in size, format and name as to suggest that comparisons are being courted. It's not just that the older Companion had the stamina to see the alphabet through, adding some valuable appendices (on Censorship, Copyright and the Copyright Act, and on the Wind, though of wind it both has plenty and is always running out. The other point is that books and personages beginning with Z tend to be neither English nor anglophone, hence no Z. When Sir Paul Harvey compiled the Oxford volume in 1932, he decided to include foreign entries in so far as they impinged on English literature "as matter of allusion". The Cambridge Guide by contrast tends to exclude what is not "English" in linguistic origin. Aaron, the first entry, is "the Moor of Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*" and you would not guess that there was a rather important figure of that name in the Old Testament. Similarly, Genesis is "A poem of nearly 3000 lines in Old English". Erasmus, though not congenitally anglophone, is included, presumably because even Michael Stapleton accepts that he was a vital presence in English intellectual life, but he gets about as much space as *Perdur*, Son of Evraing (not anglophone either, come to think of it, but UK therefore OK?) and half as much as Edith Sitwell.

The fact that this volume has global pretensions won't make this seem any

less provincial: it merely turns Little England into a sort of Little English-Speaking Union. The Guide sets out, as the Oxford Companion didn't, to cover the whole breadth of the anglophone world: British, American, Irish, South African, White Commonwealth, West Indian, African and Indian authors, but Nelson Algren and not Malcolm Cowley or Wallace Stevens, and one Naipaul but not the other and no Narayan. The net is cast wider in time as well as space. Where Harvey over-cautiously excluded contemporary authors (a few got in, when he felt their reputations could "hardly be ephemeral", and subsequent revisions, especially in Dorothy Eagle's admirable Fourth Edition, have added to the number), Stapleton's Guide is there with Athol Fugard and Thom Gunn and Geoffrey Hill and Tom Stoppard, and his William Golding and V. S. Naipaul entries include works as recent as *Rites of Passage* (1980) and *Among the Believers* (1981). In 1981, none of these authors had yet made the Companion. What ever new shape the Oxford volume will assume in its promised fifth edition by Margaret Drabble, the two reference books are not for the moment competitors in coverage, but complementary and overlapping. To own both would not be twice as good as owning one, but one and a half times as good, more or less.

Rather less than more, if you judge by quality and not just width. The gain in coverage is offset by crippling weaknesses in tone, conception, and execution. Stapleton has admirable motives. He is for a start irrepressibly friendly. He is one of those critics who sometimes refer to Jane Austen as Jane, and I suspect this is not because he finds Austen too stiff and Miss Austen too good, but because he would like everybody to call him Michael, including reviewers. He wants to provide a good read as well as a reference book, which means that facts must be supplemented by "enthusiasm", and Michael's capacity for enthusiasm is almost unbounded, extending to works which, on the evidence of his comments and innumerable plot summaries, he has scant recollection of. The way to display enthusiasm is apparently to put lots of personal opinions in your entries. "A guide who never makes a comment makes a dull companion," I bet he really meant dull Companion, which so uncompanionably preempted the name. But is he also saying that a companion ceases to be dull when he starts making comments, even when the comments are themselves dull? When an *ex cathedra* knowingsome bombastes spaciouly in an unspiced void ("I had Shelley lived longer than thirty years his poetry might have reached an extraordinary level of quality. But not necessarily...") or when there is nothing to say, but a felt need to say it (for example, Michael's only opinion about Hemingway's *Islands in the Stream* is that it "does not affect the author's

reputation one way or the other"); or when the parade of fine distinctions turns into merely vacuous assertions of "difference" ("Pickwick is not far from *Roderick Random*, though of course the Victorian tone is much more recognizable as a character than any of Richardson's; but it must be said also that Richardson's concerns were different from Fielding's"); or when the comments persistently miss the point, or the tone, or the wavelength, or all three together (in *Gulliver's Travels*, "Swift saw clearly that reason is man's priceless gift and that the ultimate appeal must always lie there": Hervey was the "enemy of Pope, who is rude" about him in his *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot* and *The Dunciad*; "Desdemona is just the kind of warm and uncomplicated girl who would love the honest and great-hearted Moor"); or when they are so eccentric that one wonders whether the author can possibly have read the book he is talking about (the *Voyage to Lisbon*, Fielding's saddest and most dejected book, is described as a work of "mellow charm... a delightful travel-diary")?

On this evidence, one sees the point of the Oxford Companion's policy to give a low profile to "literary appreciation" and to stick to "conventional" rather than personal views. Such conservatism is better suited anyway to a volume mainly designed as a factual dictionary, and the facts which you will seek in it come over more clearly and effectively where the compiler practises a decent self-effacement instead of flooding the entry with his bumptious wordiness. The Cambridge Guide is worth having as a dictionary or it is not worth having. I can't imagine any reader other than Nicolas Barker, who wrote the Foreword, ever reading it as a book, not only because it isn't a book, in that sense (though Michael thinks it is, and one which it took him "four long years... to write at that), but because it would be a very bad one if it were.

Regrettably, it is also not very good as what it is. For one thing the facts themselves are often wrong in substance or in emphasis. Take a short early entry on the *Argument Against Abolishing Christianity*. This work by Swift was not published in 1708 but in 1711, as was *The Sentiments of a Church-of-England Man* (which is not a "satirical pamphlet" and which may have been written in 1704, when Stapleton seems to think it was published, though Swift said it was written in 1708). *A Project for the Advancement of Religion* appeared in 1709, not 1708. The same short entry also refers to "what Swift called Occasional Conformity" as though the term were some sort of private usage. Other Swift entries (to take a single author, typical enough of the way many others are dealt with) show a similar pattern. The *Verses on the Death* were not published in 1731 but in 1739. Davis's edition of the prose works has not "so far reached 14 volumes" but is complete (volume 14, if Stapleton had cared to look, consists mainly of the Index; two volumes of *Journal of Samuel Johnson* were added on to this in 1974, making sixteen volumes, but this doesn't affect the issue, though it occurred in time to be known to Stapleton and apparently led to). These are only some of the errors of fact or emphasis on a single author. The list of statements which are misleading without being technically inaccurate might double the number.

Stapleton sometimes offers bibliographical advice to his readers. This is not a consistent matter of selective help formally appended, but of tips informally woven into the text as part of the compiler's friendly chat with the reader. Some authors or works get them, others not. Sometimes we are told the scholarly editions and sometimes almost anything except these. To list all the errors and misjudgments in this book would be too long, and to select a few would be unfair to the rest. The only thing to be said is that readers should be wary of advice, unless he has double-checked it

elsewhere (I say double-checked in case the reader stumbles on the original source of Stapleton's error because he seems to have got some of his mistakes from other reference books and hardly ever to have done any primary verification.) It's a pity he attempted the task, which is difficult and thankless, even when properly done, because such things go out of date quickly. Once that has happened they become not only increasingly useless but actively misleading, and in a concise literary dictionary purporting to offer basic and durable information they are an unlooked for and gratuitously disfiguring element. I know Stapleton was trying to be helpful, but bibliography isn't the most sociable of media and we've seen that his friendliest intentions aren't his own best friend anyway.

Stapleton's articles are unsigned not (like those of the Oxford Companion) because he is self-effacing, but because he has announced himself at the outset as the "author" of the whole thing. There are two signed articles by other persons, however. The first, by C. H. Sisson, is on the Bible in English. It begins with a brief history of the early translations, and a vivid statement of the pervasive influence of the Authorized Version and the Book of Common Prayer on English speech and English letters. There follows an onslaught on revisions and translations, including the Revised Version, and "increasingly reckless": "there have been a number of new versions since then, none of them of any literary value... One of the keys to a thousand years of English thought and literature is being thrown away." One can witness here in slow motion the process by which "enthusiasm" encroaches on the obligation to supply facts, the polemical element at first vitalizing the historical account, then drawing attention to itself more than to the information it is offering, and finally abandoning the informational element altogether. You would not guess from this account, for example, that there was such a thing as the New English Bible. If you knew already, the omission is pointed and telling. But if you didn't, what has become of the Guide's function as a reference book? The split purposes of this volume, which tries to be both a personal statement and a dictionary, are more spectacularly evident in Sisson's contribution than in Stapleton's broad-and-butter entries, because it is so well written and because the derelictions of duty have not been blundered into but deliberately cultivated as rhetorical ploys.

The other signed entry, by the late Barbara Strang on the English Language, demonstrates by contrast how strong convictions can coexist with a responsible informative coverage. It is the best and only really good thing in the entire volume. Strang displays with quiet combativeness the professional linguist's commitment to variety in linguistic usage, and the sardonic recognition that the language in its written and especially literary forms has a normative or standardizing or leveling tendency, both as a historical evidence, and as active influence on the spoken language. Written English, the "vehicle of literature", which "prevails worldwide, with only trivial divergences", is an abstraction from the infinite variety of spoken English, both native-regional and international (native speakers, she notes, are probably now in a minority). "Even when writers attempt to portray dialect their portrayal has for centuries been mediated by the conventions of standard orthography."

An account of English, both descriptive and historical, follows. The "English sound system", the mixed origins of vocabulary from "earliest times, word-formation, the verb tense system, clause-structure, are covered with masterly succinctness. So is the history of English as part of the Germanic sub-group of Indo-European languages, its interacting use of Norman-French, the increasing use of English in documents, with its call for standardization, intensified by the advent of printing; the international-

izing of English (through exploration, trade and settlement from the sixteenth century and through a later development as the main language of science and technology). She ends:

It is no wonder that a language which has been the vehicle of much of the experience of so much of humanity should also be the vehicle of the world's richest literature, not only English literature but that of English-speaking communities in every continent and of an unparalleled number of great writers whose mother tongue was not English. Yet, as we have seen, "English" subsumes many Englishes... Constant vigilance is needed to save the inextinguishable well from turning into a snake-pit.

Such things have been said before, with varying emphasis, by pedants of the linguistic establishment as well as by people of generous outlook and wide reading. But they have seldom been said with such authority and feeling by someone who was both a distinguished practitioner of the science of language and a learned and sensitive student of literature.

Three new double-volumes of the Dictionary of Literary Biography have just thudded into the world. They're no Companion, which is just as well, for almost £100 each few readers would be able to afford their company. Reviewing them has provided me with weightlifting exercises for two weeks. They are opulently produced, but not handsome, with a glossy vulgarity that reminds one of expensive office furniture. They have a slightly anachronistic air of conspicuous consumption, with lots of space for words, and plenty of photographs of novelists and playwrights and jackets and pages of manuscript.

That being so, they are better equipped to resolve the complex claims of reference-book and personal statement than the concise non-specialist one-volume guide, and on the whole they do it rather well. Each entry is an extended essay on an author, with individual bibliographies, supplemented by a more general reading-list among the Appendices of each double-volume. The best group of Appendices is in Volume 13, on essays on the Royal Court, on "Fringe and Alternative Theatre", on the National Theatre and the RSC, and on "The End of English Stage-Censorship, 1945-1968". There are also statements, not now, by practicing and-butter entries, because it is so well written and because the derelictions of duty have not been blundered into but deliberately cultivated as rhetorical ploys.

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Dumb spelled backwards is bmud

By Tom Disch

There is a way of writing verse, the easiest way of all, invented by proud Dundee's son, William McGonagall, and brought to perfection by America's own Ogden Nash, and that way's more or less like this - to seem to dash down whatever comes into your head with no concern for a regular metre, to churn out line upon line with but a single object or rule: To make of Rhyme a tool.

For Rhyme is what most people think of when they think of Poetry and when they complain they cannot love Those prickly modernist poets who scorn its use. Such poets, they believe, are like a cowboy trying to rope a steer without putting a knot in his noose.

That is a limited view, of course, but before we dismiss it out-of-hand we ought to consider the innate force Of Rhyme, as demonstrated in certain word-association tests given to people when they're sleepy or just woken up. In these tests, instead of associating words by sense, as in saying "Coffee" in response to "Cup", Words are linked by rhymes, so that if the tester calls out "Knife" A drowsy person would be likelier to answer "Wife" or "Strife" or even "Afterlife" Than "Fork", let us say, or "Play", even though such rhymes aren't logical ways to have replied, Unless one were actually or potentially an uxoricide. In other words, as we sink deeper into our subconscious minds It is Rhyme with its irrational but potent magic that blinds Such contraries as "Womb" and "Tomb" into Platonic wholes And gives us that characteristic blip of pleasure at the moment the poles Of the magnetized words click together and we think, "Oh-ho, there's the rhyme!" Which, if it's a good one, will give you the sensation of taking a road test in a car that can stop on a dime: I.e., a feeling of "Whoops!" and "Just so!" both at the same time, Of a punishment both fitting and discomfiting in its relation to the crime.

What crime is that? you ask. Why, the crime of Routledge & Kegan Paul Who have the gall To print, bind, and market - for £8.95! - this keg of antiquated dust And to call it a Rhyming Dictionary*. Even the Introduction by L. H. Dawson admits that for any purpose but solving crosswords it's a bust:

"... For we find in juxtaposition such words as *balize* and *judalze*, *maritime* and *centime* - which do not rhyme At all - while many perfect rhymes, such as *yes* and *survey*, *doe* and *blow*, Are separated by hundreds of pages." So, While it is possible to find a serviceable rhyming dictionary to help you through those awkward moments in a sonnet or a villanelle when no rhyme comes to mind (my own choice is Clement Wood's *Complete Rhyming Dictionary and Poet's Craft Book*),

I can't think why anyone would want a copy of this daft book, Whose sole principle of organization is reverse alphabetical order. It's about as useful an invention as a tape recorder That will only play tapes backwards or a door guaranteed to stick. Why, because some wretched pedant in 1775 with a brick For a brain decides to practise inversion on English spelling Should a publisher in A.D. 1983 continue selling His ancient dumb idea? I can't believe it! Could I have dreamt or Imagined the whole thing? No, here's the book, and my last word on it is: *Caveat emptor!*

*J. Walker, Walker's Rhyming Dictionary of the English Language, revised and enlarged by Lawrence H. Dawson; supplement compiled by Michael Freeman (583pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £8.95).

May Books from Yale

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The entries on individual authors vary in quality. Among those I enjoyed were Priscilla Martin on Charles Blackwood, S. J. Newman on Ralph Brophy, Lorna Sage on Angela Carter, Alan Hollinghurst on A. N. Wilson, Michael North on Henry Green and Jay Hallio on Angus Wilson. Winnifrid's entries on Dante, Benedictus and J. G. Farrell are brief and amusing, but Farrell's have got short measure. More places tend to be by B. S. Johnson entry.

These volumes are on the whole competently executed, though the contributors are not always at their best with British idiom: 90% British names and the proof-readers don't always spot foreign words. But if you have strong bookshelves and £300, and don't mind to buy twenty copies of the Cambridge Guide, then these volumes may be worth you.

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IRIS MURDOCH

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A. N. Wilson

Chatto & Windus The Hogarth Press

organizing principle than a historical thesis. Thomas is scrupulous in acknowledging exceptions, sensitive and open in his rendering of the copious, dense and detailed nature of his materials. Much of the evidence is valuable in itself, neither fortifying nor refuting the argument, as in his description of the great hall of the second son of the Earl of Huntingdon in 1638:

It... was strewn with marrow bones and swarmed with hawks, hounds, spaniels and terriers. The walls were hung with the skins of recently killed foxes and polecats, while in the parlour favoured dogs lay around the hearth. There were litters of cats on the chairs, and on the tables stood hawks' hoods, bells and hats full of pheasants' eggs.

What makes this memorable is that it is a record of life, not an opinion. *Man and the Natural World* could not be all the things it is, all the time. It is above all an anthology of opinions (chiefly from printed sources) about man and animals, with less extended but still substantial sections about trees, flowers and landscape.

Yet opinion taps the historical experience at one level only. Practical life can provide as much evidence of attitude as what is said or written. Roughly at the centre of Thomas's period falls the history of Myddle, as it was to be set down, c. 1701-02, by Richard Gough, published in 1875 and a work not cited by Thomas. Gough's account of the career of the crooked and formidable yeoman landowner William Tyler is a fine practical example of man and the natural world embodied in a single life and narrative. Tyler, a man of "meane stature, lancke hair", "manly countenance" and bad morals, debauched another man's

wife, and got into debt. "In those days there was not such a packe of Beagles as we have now, who make it their trade to serve Writts", but after ferocious physical resistance he was arrested and carried towards gaol, despite such "consternation and lamentation" from his accompanying friends as Gough could best express by quoting the passage in Chaucer's *Nun's Priest's Tale* when the fox has carried off the cock. At "the Town's end... stood Tyler's drunken companions... Gossage cried, 'Ah, Will, art going to the gaole... Come, boyes; fall on!' but Tyler told them it was no good. When at length he was released he was paid for planting and grafting fruit trees, in which he was "very skilfull and took much delight". Living to a great age, "Hee had a lytle flocke of sheep, which hee kept on the commons: his employment was to walk among his sheep, with a shepherd's crooke in his hand, and if hee saw a fat weather of his neighbour's, hee would catch him with his crooke, and carry him home and slaughter him for himselfe. Hee had bene accustomed to stealing all his lifetime, and could not forebear in his old age." Tyler was the shepherd who knew his sheep, though not quite in imitation of Christ. His livelihood was from the land, and his community was of man and animals as Gough's apt quotation makes clear ("Coll, our dogges" among the rest), as also his comparison of bailiffs to beagles. Tyler was in effect both cock and fox, but with the redeeming feature of his delight in planting. Who knows whether he ever considered man's place in Nature? But in his life human, animal and sylvan were closely entwined.

The life of this middle sort of man gives a vantage-point on the kinds of

book *Man and the Natural World* might have been. If it had further explored the practical and economic basis of its subject it would have been much more about agricultural change (though this is certainly discussed); it would have considered more fully the use of animals for labour of all kinds, would have paid more attention to the use of rivers and sea for transport, and considered wind and water as sources of energy and the expanding use of the water-wheel between 1500 and 1800. It would have considered the winning of natural resources other than timber: stone, coal, iron ore, and other minerals.

From another viewpoint Gough's dramatic and sententious skill recalls us to the aesthetic record, in the literary aspect of which Thomas announces his interest. Yet here I think the visual arts might have been more fully exploited. In the lifetime of William Tyler, for example, we could not find a grander conception of the harmony of man and beast than Van Dyck's painting of King Charles I on horseback, the king in command without cruelty, the steed powerful without savagery, the riding master brilliantly placed to draw attention to the movement of rider and horse, as to the consummation of his own artistry. The icon of the royal rider or huntsman is, in the hands of Van Dyck, still more of Velazquez, among the most potent in seventeenth-century painting. The equivalent in the later period and for the gentry might be found in Stubbs's mastery "The Milbanke and Melbourne Families", a painting which happens to include every feature of Thomas's subject. This harmonious vision could reach, at times, even into the portrayal of great historical events, as in the case of Velazquez's "Las Lanzas" of 1635. In a composition which boldly dramatizes both the sorrows and courtesies of surrender, the warhorse on the right, seen from the rear and carrying the eye in and round the Spanish troops to their commander, lends a formidable physical strength to the victorious side; while, on the Dutch side, the head of another horse looks almost with concern round the shoulder of the young man in the bloodstained tunic. The animals are totally integrated into the human drama and express from within the composition itself a balance between strength and understanding. In the magnificent landscape backgrounds of his court-hunting paintings of the 1630s Velazquez reminds us that for two centuries to come landscape painting itself would be a primary source for the study of man and the natural world, a source only lightly touched on in the present work, beautifully illustrated as it is.

Thomas's chosen central ground, however, is neither economic practice nor artistic expression, but the history of opinion. Yet there is one strain in the literature of the early modern period which is conspicuously opinionative, and concerned with man and animal as matter for provocative debate and subversive paradox. When at the end of Book II of *The Faerie Queene* Spenser refashions the myth of Circe to show how freshly pleasure can change man morally into brute and how holy temperance can prevent and redeem him from such a fate, one beast, Grille, is reluctant to resume human status. Better, he thinks, to be a beast. Behind this moment of the poem lies Plutarch's dialogue *Gryllus* and Gellii's *Circe* (1549). These works, together with the theriophilic reflections in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* and *Henry VIII*, are more than enough food for all, and have an unnatural craving for jewels. Swift's



An inscribed panel portrait, from the circle of Hans Maler zu Schwab, showing the twenty-one-year-old King Ferdinand I of Bohemia and Hungary (1503-64) in a gold-embroidered tunic and black coat and hat, to be offered in the sale of old master pictures in Christie's Great Rooms, 8 King Street, 5 James's, London SW1, on May 27 morning.

the opening challenge of Rochester's *Satyr against Reason and Mankind*:

Were I (who to my cost already am
One of those strange, prodigious creatures,
Man)
A spirit free to choose, for my own share,
What case of flesh and blood I pleased to wear,
I'd be a dog, a monkey, or a bear...

This shocking announcement is followed up in the headlong poetic debate by some biting comparisons: Birds feed on birds, beasts on each other; prey. But savage man alone does man betray. Pressed by necessity, they kill for food. Man undoes man to do himself no good.

Unfavourable comparison of man with beast is not merely rhetorical provocation. It is also a serious attempt to ask how reason marks man out from brute. In the light of his "right reason" the speaker half envies the life of the beast, activated yet bounded by appetite. The charge of gratuitous treachery made against man is perhaps Rochester's addition to theriophilic thought. Rochester's *Satyr* points directly to Book IV of *Gulliver's Travels*. The same provocative and chastising quest for definition is apparent there, through more complex comparison. The Houyhnhnms are not all reason (they are good at sport and reward with a perhaps Platonic song the victors in their athletic contests). The Yahoo beasts are not all appetite (they still fight one another, and there are some who are more than enough food for all, and have an unnatural craving for jewels). Swift's

portrayal of the Houyhnhnms is point from the role of the horse in pre-industrial society: both slave and steed - tractors, tanks and sports in today's terms. Rochester and Swift together make an episode in the English history of Man and the Natural World which it would have been natural to discuss, but neither authors mentioned.

Thomas's new book is not then a book or books it might have been. Even without claiming to cover its vast subject it could have done more to integrate different kinds of evidence, and reach out further towards economic history on one side and towards the aesthetic record on the other.

There are, in addition, problems in Thomas's way of citation. It is often hard to find the date of a quotation, where the reference is to an end-note comprising a cluster of primary and secondary sources, the original date in the former case not always given. Even with a subject of slow rather than sudden change the reader would like to know more readily the probable date of the evidence cited. But when all is said this is a substantial and valuable achievement. To end with criticism largely on grounds of omission would be ungrateful and would, in this case, be to overstate the significance of works of art. If not a comprehensive statement of its great subject, *Man and the Natural World* will be an indispensable introduction to it and an incentive to further work - including, we may hope, work by Keith Thomas himself.

The other island

Roy Foster

KARL S. BOTTIGHEIMER
Ireland and the Irish: A short history 301pp. Columbia University Press. \$26. 0 231 4610-3

It is probably beyond human capacity to construct an introductory history of Ireland from the earliest times to the present in nine short chapters, but this is an extremely commendable try. While the tempo is fast, the themes remain well defined, and the force of narrative is leavened by subtle which

show an impressive acquaintance with our revisionist scholarship. English policy in Ireland under the Union is particularly well treated in a short compass, but one shortcoming, inescapable in a work on this scale, is that the connection between British politics and Irish measures, especially in the 1780s and the 1840s, is not delineated. Generally the principle of selection seems to involve omitting some more obvious material order to include chapters on emigration and literature, as well as occasional sage reflections by the author. Odd locations like "underclass", "voluntary", and "sympathetic" are regrettable, and there are some elementary slips in chronology (Poe's

made Chief Secretary in 1835-4. Disraeli exhorted to lead the Tories in 1885, a general election being in January 1909 and Article 44 of the Irish Constitution seems to have survived unamended).

What is more important, and what remains impressive, is the general detachment and the lack of praise or blame, as well as a consistently cosmopolitan view. The last sentence of Karl S. Bottigheimer's last chapter, "Literature and the Irish", captures a new generation of writers to whom Ireland is a source and an inspiration, but neither the be-all and end-all. If there is a message implicit here, this short but useful book may help to spread it.

Complexities of decorum

Jonathan Keates

ANTHONY TROLLOPE

Marion Fay
Edited by R. H. Super
451pp. University of Michigan Press. \$25. 0 472 10023 8

JOHN HALPERIN (Editor)

Trollope Centenary Essays
191pp. Macmillan. £17.50. 0 333 25678 6

Hardened Trollopeans recognize their author rather in the same way that local historians acknowledge the settlement patterns and field systems of rural landscape. It is scarcely possible to open this handsome new American edition of one of his least read novels without a cynical smile as, one by one, the comforting old features heave into view. Here they all are, the narrative style as graceful, deliberate and

plodding as his author, with its coy touches of the biblical - "so it came to pass that there was great trouble in the household of the Marquis of Kingsbury" - and its obsessive lingering over dates and places, the complete lack of interest in the physical world, the chapters drably tagged with their locations, "At Gorse Hall", "Again At Stratford" or using key phrases from the text for titles (nothing here quite as good as "Likewise the Bears in Couples Agree" in *The Justice Diamonds*), the admirably self-sufficient and evidence of dialogue, the unsentimental treatment of women and the humane refusal to allow us to write off even the least regenerate of his characters without a word or two on their behalf from their creator.

The trouble with *Marion Fay* has always been that it is far too like a Trollope novel to succeed in being one on its own account. Unfair though it is to judge any book on the basis of its author's superficial conservatism, there is something touching in the fact

that a work as thunderingly old-fashioned as this should have been published in 1982. A year after *Portrait of a Lady* and six years after the completion of *Anna Karenina*, Trollope, with an engaging consistency, is still requiring us to fret over whether a man is or is not a gentleman and asking us to admire his heroine because a preposterous refinement prevents her from accepting the honourable suit of a lord. Lady Frances, the *seconda donna* (the plot throughout strangely resembles that of an *opera seria*), adores a Post Office clerk who turns out to be an Italian duke. There are low characters with names like Crocker and Demijohn, aristocrats called Lord and Lady Persiflage, and a Post Office chief, Sir Boreas Bluster, who returns us to the world of *The Three Clerks* and *The Bertrams*.

To some extent the novel represents an act of penance for the solutions proposed in *The Way We Live Now* and *The Duke's Children*, both of which urge wedlock as a destroyer of class barriers. Letta Carbury obtains no special distinction or advantage in marrying Paul Montagu, and Isabel Boncasson, though destined to become a duchess, remains irredeemably American. In *Marion Fay*, however, the projected *misalliances* of Lady Frances and her brother Lord Hampstead are scotched by circumstance - fortunately, we are to infer, for each. The former's fiancé inherits a title (which, foreign though it is, he is not allowed, even after a great deal of soul-searching, altogether to dispense with) and the latter's Quaker wealth dries up at consumption at Pegwell Bay, scrupulous to the end in her forbearance. The suggestion throughout is that their father's thoughtless espousal of radical principles encouraged the pair in their respective aberrations, but that each, suitably chastened, will embrace the hunting and house-party values they have so flamboyantly disdained.

The latent artist in Trollope rescues everything from triteness by producing a third couple, Lady Amaldina Hauteville and Lord Lwaddyth, whose practical, passionless accept-

ance of marriage as a social duty offers a shrewd purgative to cloying aristocratic bromides. Lady Amaldina's ringing cry of "I will not have myself made humdrum" in response to her mother's plea for a quiet wedding reminds us that Trollope's characters ultimately justify themselves by an awareness of the moral complexities of decorum.

Special pleading, even by so able a Trollopean as R. H. Super, is unlikely to save *Marion Fay* from among the also-rans, but the fact that it has received this sort of attention (William Small's original plans, featuring the High Art *couffures*, jutting chins and emphatic eyebrows of the du Maurier school, are all included) says much for the wholesale reappraisal of its author which has taken place during the past decade. As John Halperin points out in introducing his collection of centenary essays, Trollope is currently rivalled only by Hardy in the keen critical scrutiny devoted to him by students of Victorian fiction.

The essays themselves are as mixed a catch as one might expect from a *galerie* which carries Asa Briggs and A. L. Rowse and is dedicated to the memory of C. P. Snow. Four of them at least deserve greater expansion than this slender body allows room for. In "Trollope Revises Trollope" Andrew Wright, with a succinctness and clarity which his subject would certainly applaud, analyses the writer's working methods from the evidence of five manuscripts. Robert M. Polhemus finds "Trollope's essential humour and communal vision... in the fictive substance of unobtrusive dialogue" and Robert Tracy, in an outline sketch of classical allusion in the novels, aptly singles out a much-quoted Horace as the writer closest to the author in mood and tone, felicitously citing *non convivia, nos proelia virginum sectis* in *juvenes ungulis scutum* / *centaurus* as an epigraph for both. Finally N. John Hall reconstructs the man himself, hiding self-consciousness and gloom beneath layers of contentious bluster, a Trollopean self, indeed, which modern criticism has concentrated not unprofitably on disclosing.

Effects of sexuality

John Batchelor

ALEC FRÉCHET

John Galsworthy: A Reassessment
229pp. Macmillan. £20. 0 333 31533 9

"Irene seems to me a sneaking, creepy, selfish sort of bitch", wrote D. H. Lawrence of Galsworthy's favourite character; and he continued, "It is when he comes to see that Mr Galsworthy collapses finally. He becomes nastily sentimental. He wants to make sex important, and he only makes it repulsive." In this sober, even-handed and extremely intelligent book Alec Fréchet seeks to do away with Lawrence's satirically vituperative portrait, and to present instead a Galsworthy who writes seriously and responsibly about the "predominance of sexuality in psychological life" and whose virtues are "discretion, reasonableness and honesty". All the novels (Lawrence doubtfully declared that "all is too much" and based his famous attack on a decidedly selective reading) are discussed, in chronological order, and their themes then extracted and analysed.

This is, indeed, a "reassessment". Recent discussion of Galsworthy has tended to see him as the author of only one novel - *The Man of Property* - and one predicament, the sexual and class liberal. The lively biography by Catherine Dunne sees a steady decline in Galsworthy's later work, and blames this decline squarely on the marriage to Ayle, who is depicted as snobbish and petty (not to say castrating, frigid and manipulative), damaging his work by preventing him from writing on the themes of social and noble suffering which were natural to him, and dragging him away from the Devon which he loved to dreary, glittering Continental

resorts, partly out of restlessness, partly in order to separate him from the young daughter, Margaret Morris, with whom he fell in love when he was forty-four.

M. Fréchet would sweep away this view. His case is that Ada was an excellent wife, the inspiration for Galsworthy's work throughout his career, the practical partner who typed all the manuscripts and dealt with all the business. And he insists that the quality of the work did not in fact decline. He writes about *Beyond* with an intelligent enthusiasm which at least persuades me to re-read it, and he distinguishes *In Chancery*, the second of the Forsyte novels, as a major work which is at least as good as the first of the series, *The Man of Property*. He also convinces me that Lawrence was wrong about *The Man of Property* itself; that Galsworthy knew perfectly well what he was doing with the sexual difficulties between Soames and Irene; and that his sensitive understanding of his own nature informs Soames's vulnerable aggressiveness and Bosinney's sensuality.

Certainly at his best Galsworthy was a careful, unobtrusive and devoted craftsman. Fréchet analyses in detail a single page of *The Man of Property* to demonstrate the variety of narrative methods at work in it, and in so doing shows Galsworthy as a master of subtle and delicate effects. And he is right to claim that Galsworthy's accessibility is a virtue; he remarks that Galsworthy is "easier to read than any of his contemporaries other than Forster. But as he develops this comparison one begins to doubt his literary judgment. He seems rather conventionally pious about *Howards End*, that drastically flawed and muddled book, which he finds "far more inventive, imaginative and engaging" than Galsworthy's *Fraternity*. And if he overvalues Forster he surely offers a judgment which is wrong in the opposite direction when he says that there can

be "no more appropriate comparison" than that between Galsworthy and Thomas Mann. They write on similar themes at times and they both won the Nobel Prize, true; but in terms of literary quality do they really have much in common?

The chapter on Galsworthy's "Philosophy and Outlook" is intriguing; it is interesting to learn that Galsworthy had anything that could be described as a "philosophy" and the discussion here persuades one that there are indeed significant debts to Carlyle and Ruskin, indirect debts to Darwin and Freud (debts to Darwin are invariably indirect - did any of the Edwardians and late Victorians actually read him?) and "intellectual sympathy" with Bergson. But Fréchet also remarks, with exultant politeness, that Galsworthy's "family, childhood and education" (Harrow and New College) left him with an "Anglophilic" outlook, that Galsworthy's "typically British appeals to the generosity and kindness of his fellow countrymen" and his "British reserve, always so obvious to the French". The obtuseness and lack of intellectual curiosity are consistent with this ideal of the English upper class: his novels are "the work of a gentleman, who did not write in order to make a living, but who lived in order to write".

The Representation of Women in Fiction: Selected Papers from the English Institute, 1981, edited by Caroline G. Heilbrun and Margaret R. Higginnet (190pp. Johns Hopkins. £6. 0 8018 2928 3), includes "Fictional Consensus and Female Casualties" by Elizabeth Ermarth. "The Birth of the Artist as Heroine: (Re)production, the Künstlerroman Tradition, and the Fiction of Katherine Mansfield" by Susan Gubar. "Liberty, Scandal, Misogyny" by Jane Marcus, and "Persuasion and the Promise of Love" by Mary Poole.

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commentary

The tiger of war

Harold Hobson

JEAN GIRAUDOUX
The Trojan War will not Take Place
Lytellon Theatre

It is a sad, and, in view of the great talents involved, an unexpected thing to be forced to say that the director, Harold Pinter, and the translator, Christopher Fry, have completely botched Jean Giraudoux's *La Guerre de Troie n'aura pas lieu*. They have not trained their players in the surge and thunder, the sinuosity (except in Barry Foster's beguiling and comparatively youthful Ulysses) and the dangerous insincerity of rhetoric, the delivery of which is one of the heaviest demands made on the players of the most ambitious French plays, and a sphere in which the French theatre (and particularly Giraudoux) excel; they make (in the programme) only the most casual reference to Giraudoux's *Siegfried*, an acquaintance with which is essential to a proper appreciation of the importance of this play. Fry is guilty of a mistranslation which is consonant with Pinter's misdirection of the vital climactic scene; and both forget that Giraudoux is one of the most finished masters of irony in the history of the French theatre. In *The Trojan War* the irony is relevant at all times and places. It is simply this, that disaster is brought about, not by those who desire it, but by those who make the most strenuous efforts to avoid it. War is caused by people who oppose war, not by warmongers. This is Giraudoux's frightening message, but no one would guess it from the production at the National Theatre; nor would they recognize it as a parable to give pause to those who, in 1933, when the play was first produced, were concerned about Franco-German relations.

In the very first scene of the play, in

the dialogue between Andromache and Cassandra, it is established that at that moment the "tiger of war" is mounting the steps of the palace, which, in Eileen Dill's austere setting, resembles a compromise between the VIP bomb shelter near the Admiralty Arch and the harsh, angular, concrete mass of the National Theatre itself. On Cassandra's prophetic words the tiger enters; and behold it is Hector, the pacifist of all pacifists, the warrior so devoted to peace that he is not afraid to be called a coward, the man who when struck on the face by an enemy turns the other cheek with a joke, and maintains throughout the play in argument and action that there can be no cause in the world which can justify war. "You are lying," exclaims Andromache to Cassandra, "it is Hector!" To which Cassandra replies, "Whoever said it was not?"

At the very end Cassandra is proved to be right. The subtle Ulysses tells Hector that two nations destined to fight, even though they may not dislike each other, will fight whatever resolution they take against it. The actual reason may be trivial, "a simple event, such as the citizens wantonly cutting down the trees, or their prince wickedly making off with a woman, or the children getting out of hand... Nations, like men, die by imperceptible disorders". Hector will have none of this; yet when the Greek Ajax molests his wife Andromache, he menacingly raises his javelin; and it is the commotion caused by this threatening action of a man of peace caught off guard that starts the war he has incessantly laboured to prevent.

It is here that Fry, in the original edition of his play, sows confusion. What Giraudoux says (speaking of Ajax) is: "Pendant que Cassandra escale par la force de l'éloigner d'Andromaque et que Hector lève peu à peu son javelin, lequel Fry translates as "Ajax, while Cassandra tries to force him away from Andromache and

Hector, slowly raises his javelin". This puts the menacing weapon into the hands of the wrong man, and Pinter takes full advantage of this to leave Hector without arms. All he does is at the last moment to touch tentatively a ceremonial spear which stands before the gate of the city. Otherwise Martin Jarvis's inane Hector shows little emotion for his wife. The dramatic climax of the play is thus tamely pushed aside, and the piece finishes in a pointless *non sequitur*.

So much for the play if it is taken merely by itself, as happens at the National. Giraudoux considered that the relations between France and Germany were the most important question in the world. His earlier plays, *Siegfried*, 1928 and *The Trojan War*, 1935, both show his attitude to this. In 1928 he longed for France and Germany to be united in one country, the music and arts and legends of Germany welded into a single whole with the rationality of France. Moreover, so strong was this desire that he believed it almost capable of coming to pass. But in 1935 he thought so no longer.

For in the meantime Hitler had intervened and it was the coming of Hitler that led Giraudoux to write a play in which the comparative optimism of his earlier years had given way to a pessimism that grew blacker and blacker as time went on. Without some understanding of his treatment of the Franco-German problem in *Siegfried*, which the National could easily have given us in its explanatory notes, it is impossible to place *The Trojan War* correctly in the development of Giraudoux's political outlook. His intuitive perception of political psychology was exceptionally sound. His putting aggressive artistic imagination at the centre of German dynamism was unconsciously confirmed by Hitler himself, who declared that the conception of the Third Reich came at a performance of Wagner's *Rienzi*.

some credence to this charge when his sole suggestions as to inclusions that would broaden "the literary canon" turned out to be "women's writing of the eighteenth century", "political writing of the seventeenth century", and "Chartist writing". As instances of a needful diversity, these seemed suspiciously close-knit.

Conversely, Eagleton spoke of the variegated forms of English literature and contemporary criticism as if they were homogeneous; in his discourse, pluralism became a very singular phenomenon. As with other Marxist critics, there was a tendency to project the characteristics of his own position on to his adversaries. Aware that Marxist criticism is open to charges of being doctrinaire, he countered with the *tu quoque* response, "all criticism is ideological... your criticism is just as political as mine is". Much concerned with "power" (a word revealingly prominent in Eagleton's talk), the Marxist critic tends to maintain that all groups must be seen in terms of power, of a group with shared assumptions,

Troy, with the rationalizing Hector, is the France of *Siegfried*, and Greece, with its arts, is the Germany. But by 1935 Giraudoux's pessimism had widened to include more than the two countries to which he wished the destiny would have allowed him to be devoted. The impossibility of reconciliation between Greece and Troy, which the glittering, sardonic Ulysses of Barry Foster (the only member of the cast to sparkle) so brilliantly expounds to Hector, means more than the separation of France and Germany. In a play that is full of prophecies of the future it can stand just as well for, say, Russia and the United States, or Great Britain and Ireland.

To relieve this profound pessimism there are several passages of dazzling theatrical effect, but in this production most of them go for nothing. Noël Paget is an entrancing and provocative Helen; and Edward de Souza has a presence as the odious Demokos. But the chief failure, where its greatest strength should lie, is in the play's rhetoric. Nearly thirty years ago Michael Redgrave magnificently pitifully delivered a speech to the National Martin Jarvis makes a poor at limping thing; and the then young Robert Shaw, as a Topman, told the story of Paris and Helen's betrayal on board ship with a mocking impudence, a leering enjoyment that made Michael Forrest's version of the same narrative little better than the croaking of lugs in the night. Though their fate is eventually no different, (and, in different, in Giraudoux's view, the fate of all men and women), the characters in *The Trojan War* go but dull, along with all others, rich and poor, beautiful and ugly, without mercy and without rest, "tout droit à la damnation éternelle" - a phrase which Yves Braye used to declaim with fury at the end of the last and most terrifying episode that Giraudoux ever wrote.

and keen on enjoying cultural hegemony, he detects evidence of these traits everywhere. Here, Eagleton's recurrent references to "the literary establishment" and now "riding high" within it. Curiously, who is a Fellow of Wadham and he twice had his lengthy say on Voice, a contrived to present himself as belonging to an excluded and marginal bunch of outsiders. Such contentions are a piece with his delight in slights of hand; attempt to palm off as fact, or, as a re-statement of other people's statements - as when Paulin's neutral remark about students who have "never heard of Winston Churchill or Attlee" was later spun back on him as a desire "to have the students learn about Winston Churchill".

"It's clear to me... that literature will survive our discussion," concluded Robert Hutchison, in doubt of that. And perhaps some of the series' more naive notions about "moribundity" quietly be laid to rest.

Author, Author

Competition No 123
Readers are invited to identify the sources of the three quotations which follow and to send us the answers so that they reach this office not later than June 10. A prize of £10 is offered for the first correct set of answers opened on that date, or falling that the most nearly correct - in which case inspired guesswork will also be taken into consideration.

Entries, marked "Author, Author 123" on the envelope, should be addressed to the Editor, *The Times Literary Supplement*, Priory House, St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BX. The solution and results will appear on June 17.

1 I took her hand in mine, and we went out of the ruined place; and, as the morning mists had risen long ago

so, the evening mists were rising now and in all the broad expanse of tranquil light they showed to me. I saw no shadow of another parting from her.

2 She stood shivering at him with that cheap comfort, and it added, on the spot, thirty years to his life. She walked him away with her, however, as if she had given him the key to patience.

3 And so, I really think that I can say good-bye to my diary feeling that, after all, everything always turns out for her best.

Competition No 119
Winner: Alistair Watson
Answers:
1 The blossoms fallen, the sap: gone out of the ruined place; and, as the morning mists had risen long ago
2 The broken monuments of my great desires,
3 "This not, what once it was, the world had a rude heap together hurled it. All negligently overthrown, Guile, Deserts, Precipices, Storms, Andrew Marvell, Upon Apples House"

Faire vrai et laisser dire

Henri Zerner

Manet
Grand Palais, Paris

In the early part of this century Manet was viewed as the first modern painter. He was thought of as a natural rather than a reflective painter, one for whom what he painted was only a pretext, who borrowed ready-made compositions because he lacked imagination, who painted what he saw as he saw it, and above all as a painter absorbed in the handling of paint itself. More recently, it has become increasingly clear that he did care about what he painted, that his pictures are constructed rather than just observed, and that using existing compositions might well have been a significant strategy rather than a remedial device. With one elaborate iconographic interpretation after another, Manet would seem to have been so busy thinking things out, it is a wonder that he had time to paint at all. "Mais Manet n'est pas Chénard", as Malraux could have written.

A massive retrospective to celebrate the centenary of his death reminds us that Manet did indeed paint. Everything possible has been done to fulfil his own wish: "promise me one thing, 'don't ever let me enter a museum piecemeal... I would not be whole, and I want to stay whole.' Only a few of the important works could not be brought to Paris. Three gaps are serious: 'The Absinthe Drinker' is Manet's first important work; 'Le bon bock' - a great success at the Salon of 1873; and a painting we particularly admire today - is a picture where the painter seems to have made a deliberate effort in the direction of public taste; and the Mannheim version of 'The Execution of Maximilian' - his largest and most ambitious canvas. In spite of the unpleasant space at the Grand Palais the hanging is exemplary, both intelligent and sensitive. Particularly useful is the integration of prints and drawings with related paintings so that they are close, but do not clash. The exhibition is spectacular.

The catalogue, largely by Françoise Caumont, (Manet, 1832-1883, 544pp, £10, 27118 02302) is sumptuous, the size of a telephone directory, weight, five pounds. The catalogue *fleuve* is a recent genre and not an unmitigated blessing, but a lot of scholarship has been taken refuge there lately. This one is an outstanding example. The four introductory essays are short; the entries are often long and only occasionally irritatingly rhapsodic. Particular great deal of information. The later history of the pictures. Like me, you may not have known that "Un Bar aux Folies-Bergère" was probably the first painting to be transported in an aeroplane. More to the point, it was Mrs. Havermeyer who "hid" the "Portrait of Clemenceau" substantially off down, on the advice of Mary Cassatt, so that the composition is totally different from the one that Manet left. On the whole the entries are excellent. There are useful appendices; in particular, all Manet's letters to Zola are carefully published. Only the bibliography is disappointing: out of roughly 350 titles many are peripheral while important papers are buried in the footnotes.

All last things agree that Manet was an enchanting man, famous for his conversation. He was the intimate friend of Baudelaire, and later of the young "Mallarmé". But this conversationalist was exceptionally good at listening. When it came to discussing his work, or even painting in general, his motto: "Faire vrai et laisser dire" was one he stuck to with a firm resolve; the paintings have a sense for themselves. We now have a unique chance to ask them our questions.

This attention to dress is not peculiar

to Manet. It was, for instance, precisely in 1874 that his new intimate friend Mallarmé took on *La dernière mode*, a little fashion magazine that he wrote entirely himself for a few issues. In an unstable society, dress was a useful means of obtaining or assigning identity. More important perhaps, for artists in the romantic tradition dress was fascinating as it was an aspect of ordinary daily life, and a strong metaphor for art itself. Manet, no doubt, was unaware of Gottfried Semper's theories, published in 1860, on the role of clothing in the origins of art, but they echo a common preoccupation of many active minds at the time.

In Manet's methods for transmuting life, modern life, into art, subject matter is certainly not unimportant, a mere pretext for pictorial exercises, but this does not mean that the paintings should be read like Renaissance allegories. Too much has been made in recent years of Manet's insistence on exhibiting at the Salon and of his taste for official recognition, in an attempt to lessen his modernity and his break with the conservative art of the academy or of his master, Couture. Manet is indeed modern in the way he installs daily modern life in the place of history subjects, and because he refuses to rely on words. He does not seem to have spent much effort on titles, for instance, and most of them add nothing to the paintings. Even to understand "Nana" the reference to Zola's character is unnecessary; what is going on between the old lecher and the young lady is clear; all we need is some idea of the social habits and conventions of the

time, and fortunately Manet is not so remote from us that we cannot understand him without archaeological investigation. If Manet has trouble communicating, it is not because he relies on obscure references, but because of the lack of references, because his pictures have to be entirely visible. At the same time they do describe a world that is sharply defined in time, they are about what was "modern life", and as this becomes less and less "modern", less and less familiar, some of their meaning will

be lost, or only painstakingly reconstructed. In all likelihood, however, their extraordinary beauty will be appreciated for a long time. Now, the only thing which requires a powerful effort of reconstruction and imagination to understand is how people could have found these paintings horribly ugly. This is the most beautiful and exciting exhibition in years. The exhibition will be in Paris until August 1; it will transfer to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York in September.

commentary



"Mme Manet au piano", an oil painting of 1867-8. From the exhibition reviewed here.

A passion dispersed

Mosco Carner

GIACOMO PUCCINI

Manon Lescaut
Royal Opera House, Covent Garden

The Abbé Prévost was little more than a prolific hack but he succeeded in producing a single masterpiece that earned him a niche in eighteenth-century French literature. *Manon Lescaut* is an autobiographical novel in which this twice-renegade priest recounted experiences of his turbulent youth and, setting aside for once his routine as a writer of popular adventure stories, transmuted these experiences into perfect art. Intended in the fashion of his *Le roman de la Calixte*, the novel has been likened to a Racine tragedy, for its theme is the classical one of the conflict between reason and passion, virtue and vice illustrated in the fascination of a young nobleman with a dangerously seductive and amoral woman who stands beyond good and evil. Manon thus shows a family likeness to the something like Calixte's *Portrait of Clemenceau* substantially off down, on the advice of Mary Cassatt, so that the composition is totally different from the one that Manet left. On the whole the entries are excellent. There are useful appendices; in particular, all Manet's letters to Zola are carefully published. Only the bibliography is disappointing: out of roughly 350 titles many are peripheral while important papers are buried in the footnotes.

Manon is a minor masterpiece in which subject and treatment are ideally in tune with one another. This cannot be said of *Manon Lescaut*, which for one thing has a broken-backed

dramatic structure and for another presents the spectator with some implausible *faits accomplis*. There is for instance, no psychological transition from Manon the ingénue at Amiens about to enter a convent in Act I to Manon the flash and haughty mistress of Geronte di Ravoir in Act II. Puccini, anxious to avoid all close resemblance to Massenet, does not allow his star-crossed lovers even a short-lived happiness together; misfortune comes to them too soon, thus rendering the opera top-heavy with grief and sorrow.

Again, keen to have a big embarkation scene in Act III (definitely developed from a mere hint in Prévost at a disembarcation) in order to show Manon's utter humiliation as one of the twelve prostitutes to be deported to the New World, Puccini puts his lovers to the inconvenience of having to cross the ocean and flee to a desert in Louisiana for Manon to die there and Des Grieux to fling himself on her body; both of which they could have done earlier with much greater comfort at Le Havre. Yet Act III turns out to be the most original of the four acts and all but tedious. Not until the first act finale does the most "innocent" of his stage works, free of those deliberate assaults on our sensibilities to which we are exposed after *Tosca* and betraying - perhaps to its dramatic disadvantage - no sign yet of the calculating man of the theatre.

What of the new production? Owing to difficulties with the original producer (Piero Faggioni, whose staging of *La fanciulla del West* was much admired) Götz Friedrich from the Hamburg Opera was called in and he brought with him his designers Günther Schmieder-Stemssen and Allure Mezzies. This highly controversial producer of Covent Garden's *Ring* and *Lulu* follows, *Manon Lescaut*, a wholly traditional path, observing the original stage directions in the letter (except that he puts, instead of the composer's twelve lights-o'-love, a whole flock of them on the stage). So no surprises here. They come with a vengeance in the conducting of the newly famous Giuseppe Sinopoli, a veritable firebrand who whips the orchestra into a rare incandescence (though here and there encouraging the heavy brass unduly) and who spreads electric sparks over pit and stage. Puccini's *passione disperata* which is the opera's key-note is projected to overwhelming effect. Plácido Domingo, the intelligent musician's favourite tenor, makes an ideal Des Grieux, imbuing his lyrical phrases with tenderness as well as sensuous warmth. Thomas Allen, in excellent voice, seems, however, miscast as the scoundrel Lescart. Kiri te Kanawa is vocally alluring and almost impeccable but she presents a Manon in whom we cannot believe until her fourth act, "Sola, perduta, abbandonata" but by then it is too late to convince us that she has made this role entirely on her own. And why is her Italian diction so undistinguishable? The supporting cast is adequate - more or less.

Liberation of a libertarian

Mark Abley

The flight from dogmatics

Roy Porter

BARBARA J. SHAPIRO

Probability and Certainty in Seventeenth-Century England: A Study of the Relationships between Natural Science, Religion, History, Law and Literature. 347pp. Guildford: Princeton University Press. £30.30. 0 691 05379 0

Addressing the problem of the "great institution" of the seventeenth century, Barbara J. Shapiro adopts an approach resembling Christopher Hill's in his *Intellectual Origins of the English Revolution*. She boldly asserts that analyses which pit the arts and sciences against each other are anachronistic, since the tapestry of the mind was then seamless, woven from the common threads of shared texts (above all, the Scriptures) by polymaths like Bacon. The theses which follow from this is that such disciplines as natural philosophy, theology, law, history and *belles lettres* changed, they underwent common transformations in methodology, increasingly adopting empiricism and probability. This flight from dogmatics Professor Shapiro sees as the intellectual origin of the Enlighten-

ment, and the foundation of modern Western intellectual inquiry.

Few would dispute that the Stuart century was watershed in epistemology, inquiry and argument. "Science" – as Shapiro contends – had traditionally implied the quest for certitude (a life-jacket against the maelstrom of scepticism), and so had given pride of place to the demonstrative arts of syllogistic logic and geometry. Mere empiricism had long skulked under a cloud (irredeemably vulgar, tainted by "empirics", and riddled by the corruption of the senses); and the probable lay within the domain of rhetoric and sophistry. A mental revolution, however, was worked by such giants as Bacon, Boyle, Newton and Locke, ambitious to de throne tyrannical dogmas. Combating authority with experience, they ennobled probable knowledge by clothing it in the purple of experimental rigour and the *novum organon* of induction, by capitalizing on the ocular appeal of instruments and quantification, and by distancing themselves from such equivocal allies as "theory". Once science experience had stopped being an Achilles heel, the march of mind could quicken to the rousing strains of "moral certainty".

How the metaphysics of the New Science were forged is a success story told many times before, and Shapiro

acknowledges her debts to a distinguished line of historians of ideas, encompassing Burtt, R. F. Jones, Herschel Baker, Willey, Van Leuven, Hacking, Kuhn, and many others. But she gives the familiar tale two twists. She promotes some of the usual lower-order batting – men such as Wallis, Willis and Wilkins – up the card. And above all she sets "science" alongside other studies: in theology, the development of a Latitudinarian temper; in history, what F. Smith Fussner has termed the "revolution in historiography"; in law, new criteria of judicial evidence and testimony; and in letters, anti-rhetorical currents. This is a valuable move, not least in confirming how anachronistic it would be to cast the natural sciences as the storm-breakers of methodological literature behind as struggles and camp-followers. Rather, science was mixed up in a general charge, and Shapiro plausibly suggests, the heavy brigade, if there was one, was rational theology, smiting Calvinist literalism and popish fideism.

Yet there are serious limitations in the conception and execution of this book. Tracing "the art of the probable", Shapiro singles out its pioneers, and points to the "steps" of its ascent. But such an approach reeks of question-begging "essentialism" and teleology, and this in its turn is accentuated by her arbitrariness in

selection. Anglicans, for instance, are richly covered, but the Interregnum Puritans (studied by Charles Webster) are short-changed, being summarily dismissed as "naïve". A "lumper" rather than a "splitter", Shapiro shaves off inconvenient corners so that people slot snugly into the schema. Thus, despite recent scholarship, the Cambridge Platonists are planed down into Latitudinarians, and Newton the believer appears only as a Latitudinarian rather than as the heretical eschatologist that he was. It may well be – as she argues – that the orderly mechanical world of the seventeenth century left less room for the supernatural, but if so, how do we explain who Newton, Glanvill and More positively exulted in breaches in its mechanism?

Professor Shapiro treats her authors as intellectual history fodder, and assumes that devising a coherent methodology was their delight. "For Enlightenment the central intellectual phenomenon of the second half of the seventeenth century", she writes, "was the peculiar interaction between efforts to establish a rational basis for an historically based nondogmatic Protestant Christianity and comparable efforts to achieve a probabilistic basis for the factual assertions of scientists, historians and lawyers." I don't know what Pepsy, Dryden and Aubrey would have made of that. But

this is, as she herself admits, to do "history of ideas" in its most traditional way. But can we any longer study scientific method in isolation from its propaganda uses? Employing the sociology of knowledge and Marxist analysis of ideological domination, James Jacob, Margaret Jacob, Simon Schaffer, Steven Shapin and many others have aimed to strip the mask from empiricism and reveal its hegemonic functions. As a rhetorical device, it was a bid (they argue) to monopolize the theatre of knowledge (wasn't empiricism experiencing reality directly? wasn't seeing believing?) – upstaging the truth claims of others, such as religious radicals. Of course, the rise of probabilism was a crude conspiracy; but such critical readings need to be taken into account and it is odd to find a book nominally taking the metaphysical origins of modern thought merely at face value without engaging in discussions of ideology and legitimization.

Within its genre, this is a well-crafted synthesis, albeit written in pudding prose. Students, however, must be wary, as it is full of niggling minor errors. For example, not only does Cambridge Platonist appear throughout as "Cudworth" and the intellectual historian David Olden always as "Olynd", but, staggeringly, in a work discussing hypothesis, Newton's "hypotheses fingo" is misquoted.

Calling for more research

Paul Kennedy

PETER ALTER

Wissenschaft, Staat, Mäzene: Anfänge moderner Grossschulpolitik in Grossbritannien 1850–1920. 262pp. Stuttgart: Klett. DM96 3 608 91070 0

In view of the current debate in this country on the purposes of higher education and the needs of science, Peter Alter's book is going to be of interest to more than historians. He not only traces the evolution of a modern "science policy" in Britain, but also has much to offer upon such critical issues as the role of the state, "applied" versus "pure" science, the social position of scientists, and the example of foreign competitors. It therefore addresses questions which are as important today as they appeared to certain perceptive late-Victorians and Edwardians.

At the beginning of this story, in the Britain of Peel and Cobden, the very idea of a national science policy would have caused bewilderment. The country had become the workshop of the world through a variety of causes, but a large-scale investment in the natural sciences and technology was not one of them. With the fruits of *laissez-faire* so evident, who could believe there was any role for the state?

In 1850–51 a mere £36,000 (or 0.9 per cent of governmental expenditure) was allocated to scientific research. In the educational sphere, where the public schools and the few ancient universities devoted themselves to turning out officers and gentlemen, there was a similar neglect. Scientific experimentation was therefore left to amateur enthusiasts, supported by aristocratic patrons and by local businessmen interested in developing their particular industry or in encouraging technical education. The only "national" bodies were the Royal Society and that array of more specialized institutions – the Royal Astronomical Society, the Chemical Society of London, the Royal Geographical Society, *et al.*; heterogeneous, not to say overlap and confusion, prevailed.

This situation changed little over the next few decades: a new society founded here, a slightly increased grant, there, the opening of some regional college, marked no watershed. The real change came, Dr Alter shows, with the fears at the turn of the century about Britain's future place in the world. Overtaken by Germany and the United States in industrial productivity, shocked by the Army's weaknesses in the Boer War, threatened by a whole series of imperial challenges, a large portion of the British political élite had quickly lost its mid-Victorian confidence. National efficiency and the struggle for survival were the slogans of the

day. Urged on by "constructive imperialists" such as Chamberlain, Rosebery, Haldane and the Webbs, the British nation's attitude to science changed dramatically. The funding for research and development spiralled upwards. Imperial College was founded, as was a whole array of great elite universities, with purposes manifestly different from those of Oxbridge. The "National" Physical Laboratory was set up, as was the Medical Research Committee. Many more rich men joined in support for science, but so too did the government. In this area also, the days of the night-watchman state were numbered.

In other words, a developed science policy took off in this country, not because of a concern for the topic *per se*, but primarily because of political and economic and military pressures. Where scientific research could show itself to be "practical", that is, of value to commerce or to the armed services or the public health, it could gain governmental support. Not surprisingly, Alter's study shows this trend accelerating with the coming of the First World War. "When you are engaged in a great war", argued one MP, "you have got to organise your military side quite as much as your military and naval side. If you wish to be successful". The Department of Scientific and Industrial Research was, in consequence, an offspring of what was called "a war of chemists and engineers". By the 1920s, therefore, and despite other signs of a desire to return to Victorian *laissez-faire* practices, a reasonable and developed science policy – both institutionally and financially – had been erected. The state was now closely and irrevocably involved in the pursuit of science.

There is much else of value in *Wissenschaft, Staat, Mäzene* which cannot be described here; the details about private patronage, and about the social position of scientists, are extraordinarily interesting in their own right. There are extremely useful appendices, and a comprehensive bibliography. But the chief feature of this book is its portrayal of the interaction between scientific development and national needs, is the thing which will ensure it an important place in the historiography of western science and the growth of government.

Studies in History of Biology, No. 6, edited by William Coleman and Camille Limoges (219pp. Johns Hopkins, £9.00/18.95) contains essays by M. R. Hodge, Jane Watershein and Donna Haraway.

The institutional side

D. M. Knight

IAN INKSTER and JACK MORRELL (Editors)

Metropolis and Province: Science in British culture, 1780–1850. 288pp. Hutchinson. £17.50. 0 09 245180 9

It has quite often happened that provincials, like Franklin, Dalton, Mendel and Mendeleev, have made great scientific discoveries which have transformed contemporary world-views but in general provincial science might seem rather like provincial painting – something from which the talented escaped as speedily as possible to a metropolis. Certainly it is in major universities, museums and academies that most good science has been done, as particular institutions have enjoyed a brief or extended reign as a "centre of excellence". To the historian of science the interest of an institution was chiefly that it was the setting for the achievements of a Dalton or a Faraday; places unassociated with the eminent aroused only antiquarian interest.

Philosophy of science depends upon the belief that good science is the disinterested pursuit of truth using logic, analogy, experiment, observation and so on. But anybody who has looked at the history of science will be aware of careerism, opportunism and muddle, making it look altogether more ordinary. Intellectual satisfaction and practical usefulness have never been the sole attractions of the scientific life, and any purely rational reconstruction of past science is bound to be misleading. It is possible to go further, and write the history of science with the intellectual side left out altogether, so that institutions or minor scientific figures become the main focus.

In the volume under review, hardly any scientific papers are cited or scientific discoveries alluded to. The introductory chapter by Ian Inkster is an attempt at a synthesis of the others; presenting the book as an incursion by youngish Turks using sociological rather than philosophical categories to explore past science. The book is thus a social history of scientific culture. The question why science has become so prestigious in our culture is not altogether a simple one, nor is it clear what the attractions of science are. Inkster points to enlightenment and moral uplift, and no doubt social mobility was also an aim of some who took an interest in self-improvement and the march of intellect. This opening chapter is heavy going, and its

rather unattractive promise of providing an "analytical framework" understanding the popularity of scientific culture in Britain is hardly fulfilled.

The other authors seem more interested in history and have specific topics to keep them down to earth. Their diverse and loosely connected essays make the book a valuable one. Occasionally, as in Steven Shapin's chapter on the diffusion of science, Edinburgh, we find a rather pedestrian conclusion appended to an interesting tale; but anyone who is interested in finding out what kind of people in a number of different places were attracted to science, and what they hoped to get out of it, will learn much. We read about power-struggles within the Royal Society; about London lecturing; about the British Mineralogical Society; about science for the lower orders in Edinburgh, who were determined to control their own institutions and lectures; about conservative Bristol, where science seemed to support the status quo; and Newcastle, with its religious orthodoxy; about Yorkshire geology; and about the light that the cholera epidemic of 1831–2 throws on the status of the medical profession, deeply divided socially and nervous about specific nostrums.

As Jack Morrell remarks in his paper, a proper balance between the general and the particular is vital to the social history of science. Any writing about atomic theory or electromagnetism in the early nineteenth century knows that (that is, it is not something important, and the same would be true if he were concerned with the universities of Edinburgh or London. This conviction is borne out by the book, however, when faced with a provincial institution perhaps forgotten, or with a rather dull programme of lectures. It is a pity that the authors assembled here did not manage so often to bring their subjects to life. One may nevertheless suspect that the categories of professional status, marginality and so on which they resort to in the general part of their discussions should not be taken too seriously. Like such philosophical paradigms as "scientific rationalism", "inductivism", they may help to concentrate the mind, but they cannot divert it into very real and important questions. Whether the social history of science is done in close association with the history of intellectual history, can itself be debated, but rather arid is open to question whether science may be an ordinary human activity, but its concern with finding out about the natural world and making its history both distinctive and interesting.

DIPLOMACY

ANTHONY VERRIER

Through the Looking Glass: British Foreign Policy in an Age of Illusions. 385pp. Cape. £12.50. 0 224 01979 1

"Intelligence" is undoubtedly a significant component in the policy-making process. Its precise importance is a matter of conjecture since the organization and operation of intelligence services at home and abroad are shrouded in considerable mystery. Although the British government maintains an obsessively secretive attitude towards virtually all areas of its activity, in the case of intelligence this stance borders on the absurd. It is, for example, barely three years since the government for the first time formally acknowledged the existence in peace-time of both the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), popularly known as MI6, and the Security Service (MI5). Whitehall, however, goes to great lengths in order to maintain the fiction that the interception of foreign governments' communications does not occur. Earlier this year the Commons Select Committee on Education, while inquiring into public records policy, learned that "intercepts" from the 1919–39 period did not officially exist. There is, however, evidence to the contrary for those years and for more recent times. Stanley Baldwin, for example, told Parliament in 1927 that the government was reading Soviet diplomatic messages, and on April 3, 1982 Ted Rowlands (a junior minister in the Foreign Office, 1976–79) revealed to MPs that Britain had been intercepting Argentinian telegrams "for many years".

The one period for which intelligence records, and reminiscences, are now widely available is the Second World War. The government has released some of the relevant documents. Much has been published concerning code-breaking, covert operations and counter-intelligence. Among the most valuable books are the Official History of British Intelligence during the war (two volumes out of three published so far) and Ronald Lewin's work on signals intelligence both in the European and

the Far Eastern theatres. One of the interesting features which have emerged is the relative unimportance of intelligence at the highest level of strategic command and the conclusion that it was of greatest value in battlefield decision-making.

While we are beginning to be able to judge with some certainty the role of intelligence during the war, the continuing mystery surrounding peace-time intelligence work has meant that most investigations of the subject have tended to be "revealing", sensational, speculative and anecdotal. The massive over-protection of intelligence agencies also feeds the morbid British fascination with "moles" and a vast stream of all this has been to promote a bogus image of intelligence work as being primarily carried out by secret agents and accompanied with all the paraphernalia of spying: invisible ink, dead-letter boxes, passwords, disguises and the *Perris* word in the *Prater*. It is, therefore, with hope that one approaches a volume such as *Through the Looking Glass*, which announces on the dust-jacket (not always the most reliable source) that the book "reveals fully for the first time the crucial role of the Secret Intelligence Service in the execution of British foreign policy".

Anthony Verrier's book, however, is not exclusively devoted to the part played by intelligence. His broader theme concerns the problems accompanying overseas policy-making in a former great power, and the painful evolution of a world role commensurate with "the realities of declining national resources and changing international politics". "Imperial sentiments remain...", he remarks, while "imperial resources have gone". Since 1945 British foreign policy has to be a greater or lesser extent content with elements of illusion or make-believe, sustained above all by nothing more sinister than simple habit. Verrier goes on to argue that from the 1960s onwards what he calls the "permanent government" – Whitehall (including the SIS) – began to take a more realistic view of affairs than hitherto, albeit in the face of political obstinacy. In the end the unlikely heroes of this book are the anonymous bureaucrats who today

apparently temper the extravagant illusions of our elected masters – by inference those of the electorate too – with coolly rational, sound Whitehall common sense.

Verrier illustrates his case by examining a number of specific episodes. In a couple of introductory chapters he narrates the long history of Anglo-Russian great power rivalry – dating from well before the 1917 Revolution – and discusses Special Operations Executive and SIS operations during the Second World War which, it seems, were as much directed against communist forces as Axis. The author argues that in the two decades or so following the war covert methods were employed as a substitute for economic or military strength. These tactics met with mixed success. The attempt to overturn communist power in Albania in 1949–50 ended in complete failure. Suez in 1956 was an unmitigated disaster and provides Verrier with examples of both the "imperial" and the "realistic" approaches to British policy. On the one hand was Eden's early collusion with Israel, which Verrier asserts dated from late 1953 or early 1956 and came well before any tripartite arrangement involving France. Significantly, the Prime Minister's go-between, Patrick Dean, was a member of the Joint Intelligence Committee. On the other hand, in the autumn of 1956, just before "Operation Musketeer" was to be launched, the author maintains that a number of senior British officials were so opposed to Eden's policies that they were prepared effectively to betray the government's plans to the Americans. Sir Dick White, then head of SIS, is named specifically as "part of a small group of mandarins whose duty, as they saw it, was to tell Washington what they knew". But there was also one covert success in the Middle East: the Kuwait operation in 1961, when both SIS and MI6 combined to "steady" the country and ensure the continuance of British regional influence for a further decade.

Of rather greater importance was the role of British intelligence during the Cuban missile crisis. SIS, it appears, played a vital part in "hauling the world back from the brink of nuclear war" by passing on to Washington all the information

received from Oleg Penkovsky in Moscow – "the single most important spy" in the history of the Cold War. Provided with details of Soviet nuclear capabilities, President Kennedy was able to call Khrushchev's bluff. Most accounts of the crisis conclude that Robert Kennedy played the most significant single role in persuading the President not to take a stringently hawkish line. Verrier disagrees and gives the main credit to Robert Macnamara (Defence Secretary) and McGeorge Bundy (a Presidential Special Assistant), who was particularly fortified with the crucial Penkovsky material. Whatever the actual importance of the intelligence, it is difficult to accept that SIS deserves much credit for it. Their analysis no doubt helped make sense of the vast amount of material provided by Penkovsky but otherwise the agency seems to have done little more than collect and forward it to Washington. Neither did SIS recruit Penkovsky in the first place. Indeed the prospective agent had to pester Western embassies in Moscow for three or four months before anyone took very much interest in what he had to offer.

Verrier counterpoints the difference between political and official attitudes during the late 1960s in an examination of the Nigerian civil war. In contrast to the politicians' grand ambitions, the "permanent government" eventually concluded that Britain could actually do very little to influence the outcome of the conflict. Verrier's chapter on Ireland, however, provides little evidence to support his general case. There is a sketchy analysis of "Britain's last colonial campaign", and the development of violence in a province where, apparently, "the jackbooted, armed policeman was a more familiar sight than tolerance or progress". The author makes the tantalizing, but otherwise unelaborated, suggestion that British officials "played a crucial covert role" in the formation of the anti-Unionist Social Democratic and Labour Party. He argues that the intelligence agencies were largely

instrumental in setting up the July 1972 meeting between William Whitelaw and the Provisional IRA; a policy based on SIS's belief that "the Provisionals' inability to wage effective guerrilla war should be exposed". This happy event has still to occur, although it is not clear which actor in the Northern Ireland drama should carry the blame: SIS, the media, Ulster politicians, the Provisionals themselves, or Edward Heath who, Verrier observes, "shared with his advisors the illusion that Ireland was a problem not a tragedy".

This volume promises more than it delivers. In an epigraph the author appears to set himself up as "Everyman, not Insider", yet throughout the book he teases the reader with his privileged information. The SIS officer in Moscow who first agreed to take on Penkovsky had a "diffident bank manager's appearance and rimless spectacles". The female Station Commander in Leopoldville during the mid-1960s is now "a distinguished member of Oxford's academic establishment". Verrier quotes directly from a minute written by the SIS Controller Middle East; such access to intelligence material is on a par with that of Lord Franks's Falkland Islands Committee of Privy Counsellors. The book does not, after all, tell us very much about SIS's continuing role in the formulation of policy, although it does usefully emphasize the central importance of Whitehall as a whole. Whether the decision-making process has been distorted by illusion to any much greater extent since the war than at other times is open to question. One suspects that before the war there was simply a different set of illusions. The foreign policy of every state is, in any case, necessarily based on a measure of illusion. Being essentially self-seeking and egocentric, foreign policy depends on the fundamental misapprehension that the views and interests of the state in question are of overriding importance not only at home but also to the external world.

Spreading the dirt

David Hunt

ELIC HOWE

The Black Game: British subversive operations against the Germans during the Second World War. 276pp. Michael Joseph. £12.95. 0 7181 1718 2

War is notoriously a cure for unemployment. In British experience it is not long after one starts that work is found even for the oddest characters. In Malcolm Muggeridge's unforgettable description of his fellow-countrymen in the Intelligence Corps, "school-leavers, journalists, encyclopaedia writers, unfrocked clergymen and others" displaced *New Statesman* readers are eagerly recruited by those very services that they always supposed to be anti-intellectual. Some are even usefully employed. Elic Howe in his very readable book follows the fortunes of those who served in what was called the Political Warfare Executive. That, as A. E. Housman says, of *Überlebenskämpfe*, "the war is a game, and nobler game than high-fudge". They toiled for long hours and expended enormous mental energy for a "dozen" university degrees. Whether they "achieved" anything of value is the question about which even the most sympathetic reader will at the end of the book be

they carefully concealed their British origin. In this they differed from the output of the BBC and the pamphlets dropped by the RAF on their "leaflet raids", which were designed to be truthful and to reflect an avowable government line. Black operations were free to lie; passing themselves off as clandestine German dissidents they could invent any rumours they chose. Their aim was to deceive and mislead. To gain an audience they spoofed their stories with obscenity. Originally they used short-wave stations which meant that their audience was almost entirely restricted to the German armed forces; later an enormous 500kw medium-range transmitter was brought into use. Other stations of less importance broadcast to Italy, Yugoslavia, Hungary, the Low Countries and Scandinavia.

Mr Howe is a sympathetic character. He came to the work because of his experience of printing and book production, including a specialized knowledge of German type-faces and methods of printing. Some of his forgeries of ration-cards, leave-passes and "wanted" posters may have caused confusion and difficulties but it may be doubted whether his skill was well employed in the production of thousands of stickers bearing the single, coarse word "Schelte" in which the sixth and seventh letters were altered into the well-known, runic symbol of the SS.

He writes with loyalty and affection of his chief, Sifton Delmer, and less kindly, but justly, of Richard O'Connor, who devoted his war efforts to black propaganda; to little effect, though he afterwards made

extravagant claims about it. The ordinary reader is bound to echo Little Peterkin's question "What good came of it at last?" At home there was congenial employment for some worthy individuals; in the target area few hits were scored. German morale survived both obscenities and insinuations. Desertion is the best indication of demoralization. I will take the Italian front as an example on which I can speak with some authority. The terrain was ideally suitable for untraceable desertion. In the last year of the war, and most of those were reluctant Alsatians or Lorrainers. How records that a U-Boat captain and crew who regularly listened to black broadcasts "had a long and successful career, and the morale was high". He specifically denies a claim by Lord Ritchie-Calder that the broadcasts to the Italian Navy were successful in encouraging its surrender to the Allies; no one listened to "Radio Livorno" and the surrender was in the Armistice terms.

To begin with, high hopes were placed in propaganda. It was thought that Lord Northcliffe's organization at Crewe House had decisively influenced the result in 1918. The Germans too had often blamed a diabolic Allied propaganda for their collapse. There was also the fact that in 1918 the Imperial Navy dissolved in mutiny and the army asked for an armistice while still standing on enemy soil. By contrast with the Kaiser's soldiers and sailors Hitler's related beyond the eleventh hour, until the whole fatherland had been occupied. The propagandists had laboured in vain.

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Power and the power of speech

Roy Harris

PIERRE BOURDIEU

Ce que parler veut dire: L'économie des échanges linguistiques
244pp. Paris: Fayard. 69fr.
2213012164

In Pierre Bourdieu's writings on language and society we have seen for some years now the reddest of sociological flags being waved in front of the bull of modern linguistic orthodoxy. This spectacle, viewed from high up in the Anglo-Saxon stands, is not without entertainment value; but it is a curious spectacle indeed, and rather puzzling. For the bull appears supremely indifferent, while on the other hand the matador waves his flag from such a great distance that the bull could hardly be expected to be interested, let alone tormented. It looks like a ritual non-content choreographed by a director with a grimly off-beat sense of humour. Yet behind it all one senses that there is real blood waiting to be spilled if only the combatants would make a fight of it.

Bourdieu's critique of modern linguistics can, at the risk of oversimplification, be summarized as follows. From Saussure onwards, in Bourdieu's view, modern linguistics has been an intellectual con-trick. He sees — or thinks he sees — that Chomsky's competence is, in the final analysis, simply another name for Saussure's *langue*, and condemns the *fictio juris* by which Chomsky converts immanent laws of legitimate discourse into general norms of linguistic conformity. For Bourdieu, the postulation of a completely homogeneous speech community dodges the whole question of the socio-economic circumstances under which a linguistic competence of the Chomskyan kind could be established, and the "market conditions" which have to obtain in order to impose and maintain a distinction between right and wrong where grammar is concerned. As a result, linguists are misguidedly led to look to linguistic structure for constraints which in fact derive from the social conditions in which language operates. In short, they are obliged to *faire de la sociologie sans le savoir*.

Put like that, Bourdieu's objection sounds rather like the boring old Marxist question-time stand-by in linguistics seminars: "But what about power?" Well, what about it? The answer is that in reading Bourdieu one comes to see that "What about power?" If interpreted in Bourdieu's sense, is not quite as boring a question as it sounds (and indeed is when asked by those who usually raise it). In spite of — or perhaps because of — Bourdieu's constant economic metaphors, one comes to see that power does not have to be construed directly and crudely in terms of economics or public politics. And once that intellectual blockage is removed, then the question of linguistic power and its relation to linguistic normativity is all-pervasive in every form of discourse, spoken or written. Parents have linguistic power over their children, and teachers over their pupils. Hence assumptions about power are built in to every attempt to treat a linguistic system from the outside, whether in the level of languages, dialects, folklores or styles. The fiction of a completely homogeneous speech community becomes a nonsense, not for the reasons usually adduced by dissenting linguistic theorists, but because the notion of a speech community in which linguistic power is equally distributed among its members is incoherent. Furthermore, to defend the fiction as a theoretical idealization which is useful or essential for describing actual languages, such as English and French, makes about as much sense as claiming that, in order to describe a society's social system we need to assume that every member is equally wealthy.

This is the nub of what Bourdieu refers to as "the illusion of linguistic communion" which haunts our theorizing about language. He points out that before Saussure we had this illusion in the writings of Comte, who died in the year Saussure was born. Both use the same metaphor of a

linguistic *trésor*, a fund of language freely available for the use of the community and the individual. But the reality is otherwise. Verbal communication necessarily involves linguistic inequality. The *économie des échanges linguistiques* is an economy regulated by relations of symbolic power, which reflect the social power relations between interlocutors and groups of interlocutors. In short, there is no *langue* to which all have equal access in virtue of being members of a linguistic community.

Modern linguistics, however, pretended that there was in order to set itself up in business as a bourgeois academic discipline. It postulated an autonomous *langue* which could be studied and analysed without any reference to the social conditions of its production, reproduction and utilization. This decontextualization received different emphases in the hands of different theorists. Saussure emphasized the holistic properties of the system. Chomsky emphasized the formal properties of grammatical patterns. But the decontextualization brought about the same distortion of inquiry in all cases. Communication was rejected as a focus of study, because it was held to be merely a matter of "performance" or *parole*. Furthermore, it was dismissed anyway on the grounds of being simply a process of encoding and decoding, as if the sole activity in which the linguistic community was interested was somehow like the professional occupation of cipher clerks. The result in university departments of linguistics was what Bourdieu calls "philologism". Philologism he defines as "the theory of language which foists itself on people who have nothing to do with language except study it".

Bourdieu advocates a sociological critique of language which will replace such bogus theoretical abstractions as grammaticality, meaning and competence. The study of grammaticality is to be replaced by the study of the legitimacy of language, the study of meaning by the study of the value and power of speech, and the study of competence by the study of linguistic capital. Nothing less, in his view, will come to terms with the simple fact that language is first and foremost a *praxis*.

It is at this point in the spectacle that one begins to wish the matador would get a little closer to the bull. For there seem to be innumerable ways in which this particular line of attack on the theoretical foundations of modern linguistics could be pressed home. It may be that Bourdieu simply thinks that is someone else's job; but there is perhaps a more significant reason which I shall come to shortly. Whatever the reason, it is a pity that Bourdieu does not bother with any of the splendid illustrative material that lies at hand almost begging to be used in the service of his thesis. Take, for instance, the notion dear to Chomskyan linguistics and psycholinguistics that every competent speaker is equipped with a mental "lexicon". What is this lexicon? It is, to put it plainly, a dictionary allegedly "internalized" in the brain somehow. It lists the vocabulary of a speaker's native language and defines the meaning of each word. But where did the idea of a monolingual dictionary come from? It is the product of a certain type of linguistic orthodoxy, which assumed central importance at a particular phase in European history. The need to "fix" the language, as Renaissance writers used to say, entailed the obligation of limiting the linguistic liberty both of individuals and of groups, and condemning certain usages as "incorrect". Incorrect by whose criteria? The answer in particular cases is not open to doubt. Anyone who examines the lexicographical history of the greatest monolingual dictionary of all cannot fail to be struck by the extent to which the compilers of the *Oxford English Dictionary* were operating a form of class-bias assumptions about what "correct" English was. From the *OED* to the modern psycholinguist's mental lexicon is not such a big step as it looks. Providing all English speakers with a mental lexicon is simply a second or third-generation theoretical endorsement of the

prescriptivism inherent in Victorian dictionary-making. It took only a hundred years for censorship to end up as science.

That is not all, however. The institutionalization of this concept of the word simultaneously proposed and propagated through the agency of dictionaries is itself a powerful instrument in enforcing an educational programme based upon the norms, expectations and tastes of a particular class. Words come to be seen as inherently having right and wrong uses. The dictionary itself takes on authority, independently of its compilers, and imposes that authority on all strata of society. Arthur Scargill's dad, we have recently been told, reads his dictionary every day — an example of therapeutic piety which invites comparison with the once common practice of daily Bible reading. What exactly that has done to Scargill senior's mental lexicon nobody knows. But it can hardly have failed to inculcate belief in that *mot à toutes fins* du dictionnaire whose actual social existence Bourdieu explicitly denies. Belief in the lexicographer's word (in both senses) is an integral part of the powerful language myth on which modern linguistics is based, and which enables the dictionary entry to function as a self-fulfilling prophecy.

For a craftsman so keenly interested in language, and one who can make very shrewd observations about the style of writers as diverse as Heidegger and Montaigne, Bourdieu is a dismal case-study. His polemic prose moves with all the poise and agility of a matador with two left feet. This general ungainliness is emphasized rather than concealed by the occasional flourishes which are skillfully executed. He compares literary semiotics to the prayer-wheels of Tibet (which works better in French

because of the echo from *moulin à prières* to *moulin à paroles*). Occasionally he produces phrases which have a kind of brutal Pseudo-Corner charm, like *la logique des automatismes verbaux*. But for most of the time the reader is embarrassingly aware of a desperate effort to wring cumulative verbal effects out of the unpromising material provided by the French sociological jargon. In the end, one cannot repress the uneasy feeling that Bourdieu, in spite of himself, is a kind of enlightened Whorfian, accepting linguistic imprisonment within a certain style of writing because he believes it unavoidable if he is to say what he wants to say, since that form of discourse alone makes available the concepts required for his message.

His envious glances at Heidegger point to the same conclusion. Perhaps the explanation lies in Bourdieu's obsession with the problem of linguistic legitimacy. For this, in an odd way, comes very close to Whorfianism in its least defensible form. (Those who object to this as a slur on Whorf are at liberty to substitute "pseudo-Whorfianism" for "Whorfianism" in the last sentence. We are here concerned with the Whorf of linguistic repute, not the Whorf of insurance reality.) Not that Bourdieu ostensibly has much time for Whorf: there is only one reference to Whorf in the book, and the index even manages to misspell his name. None the less Bourdieu occasionally makes remarks which have a Whorfian ring to them, as when he observes that ordinary language not only provides a reservoir of expressions potentially utilisable for poetic and philosophical games of various kinds, but also a reservoir of *formes de l'aperception du monde social*, wherein we can find the "principles of the vision of the social world which are shared by the whole group". In the same passage he

describes ordinary language as the product of the cumulative labour of thought dominated by power relations between classes. This links up with his remarks on style and on *la langue* as a kind of *langage* of the dominant. Criticizing the language of an article by Etienne Balibar, he observes that within this mode of discourse there is concealed a metadiscourse which has no other function than to establish the intellectual and political importance of what the writer is saying. *Mutatis mutandis*, one could generalize this, and draw from it the observation that every form of discourse must somehow employ metadiscursive devices which affirm its validity by indicating to the listener or reader how what it said is intended to be taken, and maintaining that projected intention as a consistent and plausible one. To the extent that discourse fails to do this, it invites dismissal as illegitimate or non-serious. In a word, it lacks authenticity, and producers *pro tanto* lose or fail to exercise linguistic power.

That may be why in the end Bourdieu refrains to the extent that he does from pressing his attack on the linguistic dogmas he so clearly rejects. For from his point of view these dogmas are in the final analysis protected by the very form of academic discourse in which they are embedded. Making no sense except within the disciplinary confines of linguistics, they certainly make none outside. So to demonstrate in detail how and why they are mistaken would involve the attempt to criticize one whole form of academic discourse from the standpoint of another form of academic discourse. Even if the conflict could be brought to some quarters, it would inevitably end in a stalemate. In this particular *comité*, unless contempt can kill, the bull will live to a ripe old age. Perhaps, altered the laws of historical materialism have determined that the best shall survive.

RP and non-RP

R. B. Le Page

PETER TRUDGILL

On Dialect: Social and geographical perspectives
240pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £15.
0 631 13151 5

Peter Trudgill brings together here (after revision) a general introduction to the study of language variation and twelve subsequent chapters on various aspects of that study, all of which have been previously published or given at conferences. The book therefore forms a compendium of valuable papers; moreover, Trudgill has managed so to arrange them as to develop two themes: first, of the explanatory adequacy that sociolinguistics might develop; second, of the ideological commitment of sociolinguistics to the cause of "equal respect for all language varieties".

On the second point he is, in so far as his audience consists of linguists, preaching largely to the converted, but the notion that linguists ought to try to enlighten public opinion is sound. The institutionalization and totémization of the standard language, which is the nature of the RP, is a process which has taken place in many languages, and it is to be regretted that he has not taken pains to acquire those norms, and therefore have a vested interest in them. It was therefore the local press with expulsion from Jamaica in the 1950s because I began the study of "bad English", i.e. Jamaican Creole. As Trudgill shows, the guardians of "correct language" will take any stick to those who argue for a greater insight into and tolerance of non-standard dialects. Their arguments, which he quotes, tend to be ignorant in both the Standard and the West Indian sense (= arrogant, overbearing, ill-mannered). Obviously, as he says, teachers will try to give children that command of standard written English by which the outside world will judge them — but the outcome is happier all round if they are given this with insight and respect, and respect of the child's home language and attachment to home culture, and if they do not try to

force every child to become a little RP (Received Pronunciation) speaker. (If children want to, they will, if they don't want to, they won't.) By such means, Trudgill hopes — I share the hope — that we may return to an appreciation of linguistic and cultural pluralism in Britain.

On the first point, however, I find myself having doubts as to the nature of his sociolinguistic "explanations". He is right to ask that dialectology, historical linguistics and linguistic theory take notice of the findings and methods of sociolinguistics, and to criticize the Leeds-based *Survey of English Dialects* for not doing so. He is right to try to improve sociolinguistic techniques, as in his chapters on linguistic change and diffusion and on vowel mergers. But I am not certain that the penetration provided by his "sociolinguistic" approach necessarily provides greater explanatory power. To begin with, the geographers' "gravity model" is an exploratory gambit for a research programme, nothing more; it calculates the supposed forces of interaction between two urban populations as proportional to the product of the distance between them. If this measure gives results which do not fit the facts (e.g. of trade, of cultural influence, etc.), new coefficients tend to be introduced on an *ad hoc* basis to allow for other factors. But in Trudgill's main example, linguistic influence, is handled as a one-way affair, from London to Norwich, and this is done by assuming that "interaction" consists of an influence on each to direction proportional to population size. Trudgill's own footnote on page 83, about the "negative prestige" of New York, and the fact that "attitudinal factors cannot be ignored", effectively destroys the value of the model (although not of his work). A small cultural centre can exert great influence on a larger urban centre. In prestige, in high, and gravitational model should in any case take into account multidirectional forces among bodies in orbit.

Again, the hexagonal mapping and sampling, undertaken in Southern Norway, to handle simultaneously "temporal, geographical, social and linguistic continua", undoubtedly produce more interesting data than older dialect surveys, and show in example, that the linguistic influence of Larvik is transmitted nowadays via road communications, formerly by "word" and not the "why" of young people changing their linguistic behaviour. In the vowel merger, the mechanisms of change are handled with great delicacy so that what needs to be explained is more clearly defined — but still, I think, not explained. As Trudgill himself concludes, "we simply don't know".

There is too much in this book of value to do justice to in a short review. The two studies of Arvanitika speakers around Athens, and their gradual integration into an interesting for sociological and linguistic reasons, is a pity that questions of pidginization and creolization were dragged in. Trudgill himself concludes, "the book does not fit, and he has managed to change their linguistic behaviour. In the vowel merger, the mechanisms of change are handled with great delicacy so that what needs to be explained is more clearly defined — but still, I think, not explained. As Trudgill himself concludes, "we simply don't know".

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Down by the riverside

Virginia Llewellyn Smith

ANDREW R. DURKIN

Sergei Aksakov and Russian Pastoral
231pp. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press. £25.50.
0 8135 0954 8

One good reason for writing a book on Sergei Timofeevich Aksakov in English is that no one has done it before; but someone certainly would have, were Aksakov really a major figure in the age of Russian realism, as this study claims. He is nowhere near equal in brilliance to younger contemporaries like Tolstoy and Turgenyev; rather, his work glows like a nightlight, steady and comforting.

In the intellectual uproar of the 1840s Aksakov's sons Konstantin and Ivan became well-known supporters of the slavophile movement. The elder Aksakov was however — according to Konstantin — inadequately educated; and though he grew a beard to show solidarity with the cause, he evidently cared little for heated debate, preferring cards, amateur theatricals, shooting and fishing. These, it is here asserted, he treated as "self-valuable activities that had a serious aesthetic dimension". Certainly when he started writing, late in life, Aksakov took that seriously, and happily chose the subject-matter that was exactly right for him and for his readership. His first book, *Notes on Fishing*, went through several editions in his lifetime, which could indicate his stature as a writer, as it could also indicate the number of literate Russians who counted among his hobbies.

Outside Russia, Aksakov is known for his autobiographical trilogy (now being reissued in J. D. Duff's translation), *Family Chronicle* (see paperbacks in brief on page 527) describes his grandfather's feudal establishment in eastern Russia (a wild frontier in those days, though the *svayasye* was unobtrusive), and his father's marriage. Two subsequent volumes deal with Aksakov's own childhood spent largely on the estate, and his education in Kazan. A clarity of sources other than the trilogy itself makes it difficult to ascertain how

much of the story is actually true. Andrew R. Durkin emphasizes Aksakov's aspirations to artistry, and his use of literary models and devices, reaching the conclusion that the result was something between fact and fiction and that "the perceptive reader is forced to accept ambiguity and to recognize the unique status of the text in question".

This makes reading Aksakov sound harder work than it really is. He is in fact the most undemanding of writers, perfect for convalescent reading — perhaps because Sergei (young Aksakov) spends a lot of time in bed, tended by an adoring mother. The idealized portrait of her in *Family Chronicle* was written, we learn, when the middle-aged Aksakov was recuperating from illness. We learn too that, according to Ivan Aksakov, the mother ceased to love Sergei after he married; and that in later life Aksakov avoided revisiting his childhood home.

It is plausibly suggested that Aksakov wrote the trilogy to fix in aesthetic form a lost world, remote in space and time: a golden age of rural tranquillity and harmony with nature. Aksakov is Russian pastoral. There is nothing quite like the trilogy in Russian prose, soon to be given over to strident concern with social issues and restless examination of the inner man.

Attempts by Dobrolyubov and more recently by Soviet critics to drag Aksakov into the radical team are absurd. He is never subversive: in *Family Chronicle* the evils of serfdom are not concealed, but they are subordinated to the dominant impression of a stable society based on fixed categories and formulae. Durkin rightly stresses that there is a ritual element in the narrative which has its counterpart in the analytical viewpoint of Sergei's town-bred mother. He could also have said that the tension between two ways of life not only holds together the rambling recollections of Aksakov's own experience, but provides an emotional focus for his self-absorption.

As Sergei matures he comes to accept civilized urban society. Durkin makes the essential point that, unlike Tolstoy, Aksakov does not present childhood as an inherently desirable

state; but it is clearly outside his intended scope to explore the relation of Tolstoy's memoirs to Aksakov's, beyond suggesting Tolstoy as a possible influence. Any such comparison would not necessarily favour Tolstoy. A comment on children's use of language, quoted by Durkin, is wholly characteristic of Aksakov entirely lacks Tolstoy's insistence on the didacticism; but also, one feels, the imagination of genius: his *Recollections of Gogol* make it clear that he could never pin down so bizarre a bird, and he abandoned them unfinished, to concentrate sensibly on what he knew best — himself, his people and the natural world.

Aksakov, it is asserted, issues an invitation to the reader to share a critical school. This is clearly true, and it is equally clear that Durkin is addressing the other sort of reader. Aksakov deplored the difficulty of

achieving a simple, unselfconscious style, and analysing that style brings its own problems. Durkin has plainly understood what inspired Aksakov, and his criticism on the level of detail is perceptive; but his method appears awkwardly adapted to his subject-matter, and his idiom is often painfully inappropriate to it (for example: Sergei's dawning apprehension that not everybody is lovable becomes the discovery that "the universal applicability of the model of the relations within the family... may in fact not be valid"). Durkin has perhaps tried to please in too many quarters: it may benefit a few to have references at the foot of the page, but it would have been far better to have Russian quotations in Cyrillic, not transliteration; and why are translations given of some of them and not others, quite unsystematically?

In the chapter entitled "The Strategy of the Hunter", Durkin seeks to show that by his deployment of narrative devices Aksakov makes the reader

participate in the essential pleasures of the chase. But since one of the pleasures mentioned is risk, or tension, it follows that *Notes on a Hunter* should provide excitement, and where else but in its descriptions of the kill? Yet the only such passage Durkin cites runs: "I tirelessly, daily went out from woodcock: November 6 I killed eight, on the seventh, twelve..." — and more of the same. One is forced to conclude that the wider appeal of these manuals is analogous to that of cookbooks of the informative, well-written sort: they offer the placid, sedentary enjoyment of an energetic process. The excitement of the hunt is lacking in this chapter and, less conspicuously, in Durkin's study as a whole. His broad theme — that Aksakov uses "memory, nature and art as a means of overcoming time" — is unexceptionable; but despite the complexity of the net he has cast, the old trout seems to have slid through one of its holes, escaping, one suspects, to a calmer backwater.

Serving Queen Equality

Kyril FitzLyon

N. G. CHERNYSHEVSKY

What Is To Be Done?: Tales About New People
378pp. Virago. Paperback, £3.95.
0 86068 2

What is to be Done?, the novel which Chernyshevsky wrote in 1862-3 while in prison on a political charge, is an excellent example of the effect third-rate literature can have on first-rate minds. Lenin, in a picturesque phrase, said he had been "ploughed over" by it, which involves a field ready to receive the seed for the coming harvest. Plekhanov, "the father of Russian Marxism", felt much the same and insisted that he was speaking for the best of his generation, who read the novel as if it were Holy Writ. Literature had long been considered in Russia more as an instrument for

spreading social ideas and ideals than as an art in its own right, to be enjoyed for its own sake, especially so in the latter half of the nineteenth century and particularly among "progressive elements". That Chernyshevsky's prose was stodgy, that the situations in his novel were artificial and far-fetched and the characters improbable and lifeless was accepted without a tremor as something not worth troubling about. Even the author's way of constantly apostrophizing his characters as well as the reader did not seem to matter. The medium very definitely was the message and the message of *What is to be Done?* was contained in the two answers that the question of the title prompted, one on the personal and the other on the public level.

On the personal level, the answer was to achieve freedom in personal relations and complete equality of rights and obligations between the sexes. Partly, perhaps, because in nineteenth-century Russia women's legal rights (property, custody of children, etc.) were inadequate, were, on the whole, somewhat in advance of Western Europe, the novel dwells more on the need to change individual and private attitudes, emotions and morality than on the need to reform existing laws. It expressly recognizes that individuals are motivated entirely by self-interest — although presumably (even if Chernyshevsky nowhere says so) such self-interest should be wisely understood and interpreted. Women should work and not expect to be kept by their husbands; jealousy should disappear, as must family, and, especially, parental, tyranny; people should choose and change their marriage partners freely, *ménages à trois* (popular in Russian intellectual circles at the time) should be accepted as normal and even, on occasion, desirable.

On the public level, the salvation of the world was to be achieved by the heroic, Vera Pavlovna, starts one workshop after another, all of them immediately successful. The future of business enterprise obviously belongs to them. The more general future is revealed to Vera Pavlovna in one of her frequent dreams (her dreams are always instructive). The reign of Queen Equality, "when man recognizes woman as his equal", has begun — the reign of love, beauty, justice and aluminium (the ideal metal), and of communal meals, with "only five or six courses" (Chernyshevsky's idea of abstinence). The "palace that now stands on Sydenham Hill" (which Chernyshevsky saw when he visited Herzen in London), with old people and small children serving the hale and hearty workers, and being responsible for all household chores.

Chernyshevsky always found it difficult to finish his novels. So do his English readers, but the task of his English-speaking readers is made no easier by having to cope with *What is to be Done?* in the appalling translation

produced precisely one hundred years ago by Benjamin R. Tucker, the American anarchist, admired by Bernard Shaw. Besides being awkward, it is also inaccurate. In its key scene, when the heroine confesses to her husband that she loves another man, the pronoun "you" is substituted for "him" and the confession is thereby changed into a passionate affirmation by her of her love for her husband. The subsequent events come, therefore, as a surprise unplanned by the author. But at least Tucker did not go as far as his compatriots, Dole and Skidelsky, who admitted in the preface to their translation of the same book three years later that they had "slightly amended" (not, be it noted, merely "amended") the character of one of the principal male personages — the heroine's second husband — "better to suit the American ideal of man".

The present publication is not, as claimed by the publishers, the "original translation by Benjamin R. Tucker, expanded by Cathy Porter". It is a reprint of Ludmilla Turkevich's drastically abridged (as well as revised) version of Tucker's translation for the Vintage Books paperback published by Random House in 1961. Four of the many passages omitted in that edition have been restored, fortunately, in Cathy Porter's much smoother translation. In a highly misleading note the publishers inform their readers that the four passages had been "censored from the original translation" as they were "considered too subversive in their sustained version of socialism". Censored by whom and at what stage? Unfortunately, Ms Porter has found it necessary in her new preface to confirm her publishers' note without explaining it. This implies that in her view not only was the Turkish abridgment the result of censorship, but also that censorship in America was more stringent in the 1960s than in Russia in the 1860s when the novel was published in full (it has continued to be published in full here ever since).

Ms Porter lavishes very fulsome praise on both the novel and its author, but her acquaintance with either appears to be somewhat cursory. She seems unaware that many more passages have been cut in the present abridged version than the four she has re-translated, misnames one of the principal characters and repeats (with E. H. Carr in his introduction, Tucker in his translator's preface, both reprinted here, and the publishers in their note) that *What is to be Done?* was Chernyshevsky's only novel. In fact, of course, he had many more to his credit, including *The Prologue* so much admired by Lenin. However, Ms Porter's blunders (and E. H. Carr's, who adds a few of his own) can easily be explained: Chernyshevsky and his novels have, after all, long ago joined the formidable army of the Great Unread.

Louise and Aylmer Maude's translation of Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* has appeared in The World's Classics series (1346pp., Vol. 1, 0 19 281582, 2; Vol. 2, 0 19 281614, 4 OUP paperback, £2.95 each).

The Ukraine as utopia

Arnold McMillin

GEORGE G. GRABOWICZ
The Poet as Mythmaker: A Study of Symbolic Meaning in Taras Shevchenko
172pp. Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute. £8.75.
0 674 67854 2

The unique status of Taras Shevchenko as the bearer and embodiment of Ukrainian national ideals has long required re-examination outside the by now thoroughly polarized and entrenched interpretations of (mainly Soviet) nationalists and (mainly Western) socialist ideologues. George Grabowicz, rejecting superficial and narrow concentration on the metaphorical or mythic dimensions, finds the key to Shevchenko's paradoxical literary heritage in the code of myth, and it is to the deep structure of myth in his Ukrainian poetry that this valuable and interesting study is devoted.

Professor Grabowicz begins by very properly distinguishing between the myth of Ukrainian poetry to whom he refers as Shevchenko, the "unadjusted" self, and the writer of poems, a diary, novellas and plays all in Russian, as well as Ukrainian prose and correspondence in both Ukrainian and Russian, representing the writer's "adjusted" self. The Ukrainian poetry in fact belongs to only a small part of Shevchenko's mature life, but for all its brevity it is precisely here that the all-important myth is generated and

indeed many scholars, is precisely the one projected by his poetry: of Shevchenko the martyr and prophet living only for and through his people. This has become the real Shevchenko. He has become, to paraphrase Claude Lévi-Strauss, the product and hero of his own myth.

In approaching Shevchenko through the code of his myth, the author of this study is consciously setting aside many important aspects of the poet: not only consideration of his "adjusted" self, and of the other major code operating in the poetry, that of psychology, but also all aesthetic judgment. His focus on the poet's mythical thought is deliberately narrow, but clarity is maintained throughout and, at the end of the book, conclusions of broad implication for the Ukraine are convincingly presented.

After an opening chapter on Shevchenko's duality, followed by a study of history and mythology in his poetry (mythology because the historical or quasi-historical material is subordinated and incorporated into the structure of myth), in the central third chapter Grabowicz discusses myth as it is worked out through various characteristic themes such as that of "unfortunate lovers", and the family (which in Shevchenko's poetry never functions as an effective unit, chosen models. The author ends his study by reflecting on the overall effects of Shevchenko's historical fate, as much the product as a maker of his own myth). The socio-political legacy has indeed been questionable, with myth and ideal all too often elevated over analysis and practical action. And whilst the myth was presented in only one part of Shevchenko's literary work, and barely corresponds at all to his mature life, none the less to this day it continues to be dominant in Ukrainian culture.

For the continuation of the real state of affairs and the mass of evidence which supports it, the image of Shevchenko now held in the minds of millions of his countrymen, and

for Shevchenko always evil — is seen in

